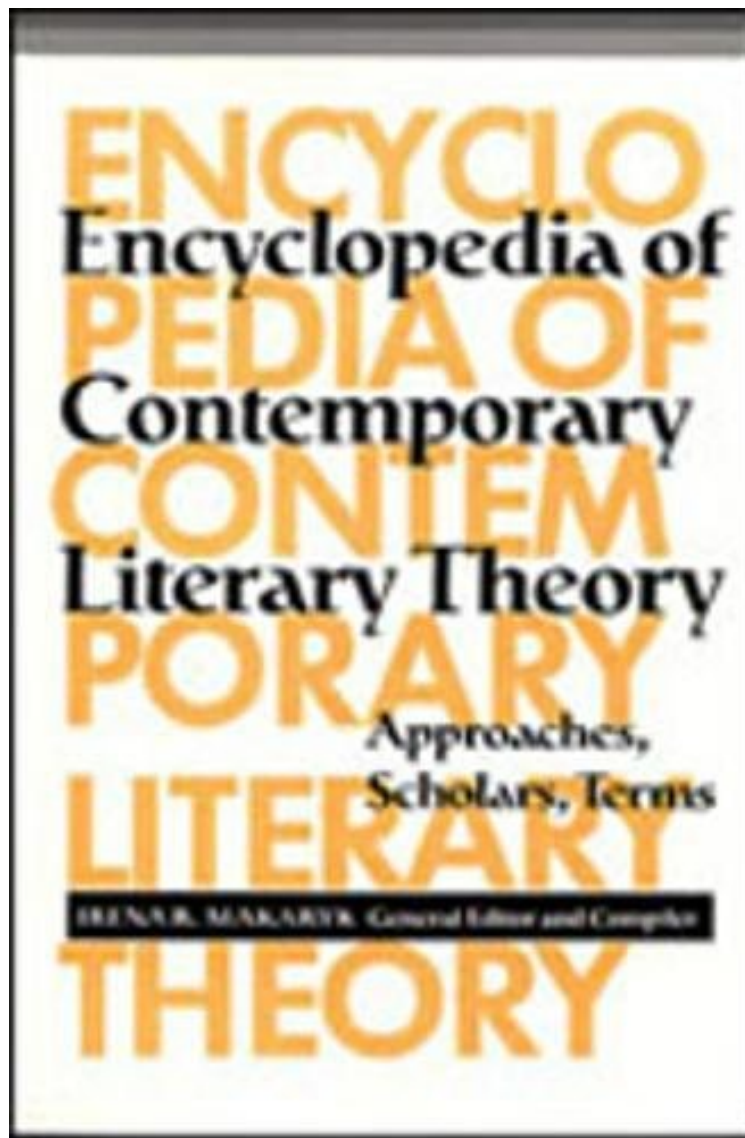


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The last half of the twentieth century has seen the emergence of literary theory as a new discipline. As with any body of scholarship, various schools of thought exist, and sometimes conflict, within it. I.R. Makaryk has compiled a welcome guide to the field. Accessible and jargon-free, the Encyclopedia of Contemporary Literary Theory provides lucid, concise explanations of myriad approaches to literature that have arisen over the past forty years.Some 170 scholars from around the world have contributed their expertise to this volume. Their work is organized into three parts. In Part I, forty evaluative essays examine the historical and cultural context out of which new schools of and approaches to literature arose. The essays also discuss the uses and limitations of the various schools, and the key issues they address.Part II focuses on individual theorists. It provides a more detailed picture of the network of scholars not always easily pigeonholed into the categories of Part I. This second section analyses the individual achievements, as well as the influence, of specific scholars, and places them in a larger critical context.Part III deals with the vocabulary of literary theory. It identifies significant, complex terms, places them in context, and explains their origins and use.Accessibility is a key feature of the work. By avoiding jargon, providing mini-bibliographies, and cross-referencing throughout, Makaryk has provided an indispensable tool for literary theorists and historians and for all scholars and students of contemporary criticism and culture.

'Irena Makaryck has put together what is quite simply the best reference on literary and cultural theory available... The book is first impressive in its breadth and clear relevance to all disciplines of the humanities, including entries on theory from literary studies, of course, but also from linguistics, psychoanalysis, anthropology, sociology, history, art and film studies, women's studies, and so on.' (Ross Leckie *The Prince George Citizen*)"Another of the best of the recent guides, *Encyclopedia of Contemporary Literary Theory*,...complements Johns Hopkins Guide by emphasizing more recent Franco-American theory...[the entries are clearly written, balanced, informative discussions that typically conclude with a list of suggested primary and secondary readings.] (James Harner *Literary Research Guide*)"The 170 contributors...do a commendable job of providing the summary one wants from an encyclopedia while attending to the complexity and controversy that characterize the field.' (H. Kieft *Choice*)"The book offers a complete look at the criticism contemporaneous with and newer than New Criticism. It fills an almost empty niche. While there are many books that discuss and explain a particular literary theory, books that cover them all are few. ... More than a ready reference book, it will be used by both new students of literature and those whose studies were concentrated at a time when the New Criticism was indeed new.' (Terry Ann Mood *American Reference Book Annual*)About the AuthorIrena R. Makaryk is a professor in the Department of English at the University of Ottawa.