



What's Wrong with Postmodernism?: Critical Theory and the Ends of Philosophy (Parallax: Revisions of Culture and Society)

Christopher Norris

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In *What's Wrong with Postmodernism* Norris critiques the "postmodern-pragmatist malaise" of Baudrillard, Fish, Rorty, and Lyotard. In contrast he finds a continuing critical impulse—an "enlightened or emancipatory interest"—in thinkers like Derrida, de Man, Bhaskar, and Habermas. Offering a provocative reassessment of Derrida's influence on modern thinking, Norris attempts to sever the tie between deconstruction and American literary critics who, he argues, favor endless, playful, polysemic interpretation at the expense of systematic argument.

As he explores leftist attempts to arrive at an accommodation with postmodernism, Norris addresses the politics of deconstruction, the issue of men in feminism, Habermas' quarrel with Derrida, narrative theory as a hermeneutic paradigm, musical aesthetics in relation to literary theory, and various aspects of postmodern debate. A chapter on Stanley Fish brings several of these topics together and offers a generalized statement on the function of current criticism.

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