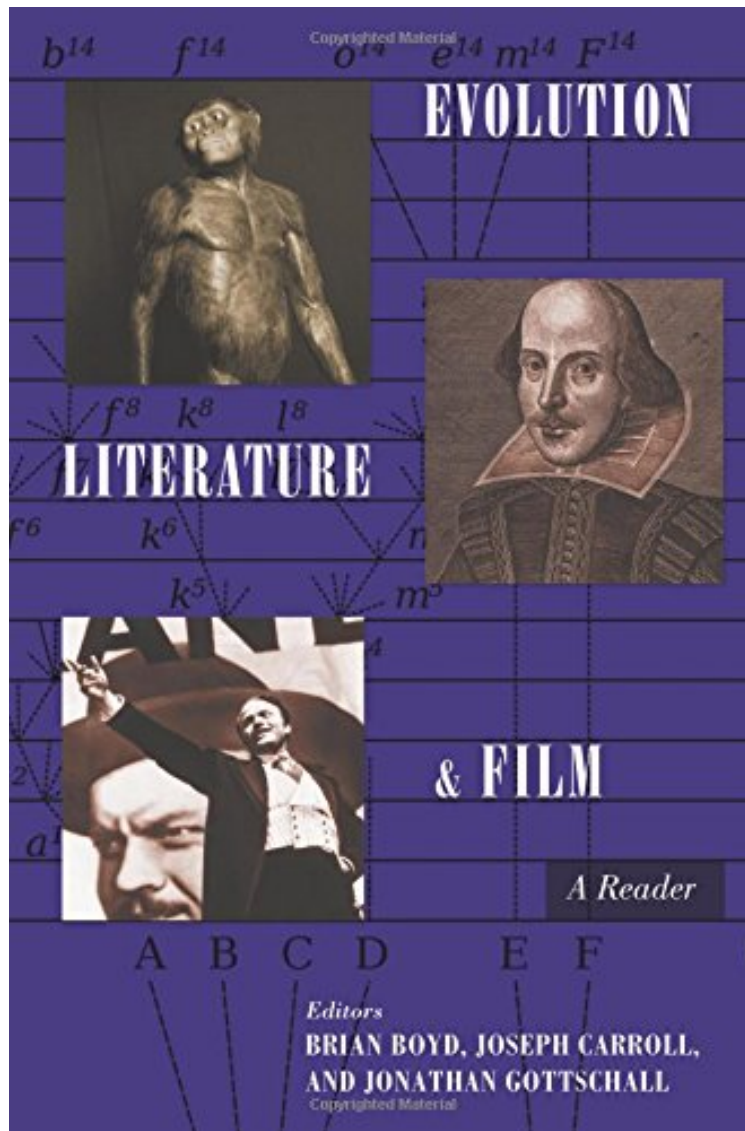


(Free download) Evolution, Literature, and Film: A Reader

## Evolution, Literature, and Film: A Reader

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#1674586 in Books Boyd Brian Carroll Joseph Gottschall Jonathan 2010-06-10 2010-06-11 Original language: English PDF # 1 9.25 x 1.32 x 6.13l, 1.80 #File Name: 0231150199584 pages Evolution Literature and Film A Reader | File size: 68.Mb

From Boyd Brian Carroll Joseph Gottschall Jonathan : **Evolution, Literature, and Film: A Reader** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Evolution, Literature, and Film: A Reader:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Unfulfilled potential By Saxon Boy This volume goes beyond merely giving a representative sampling of various specialized foci within the field of evolutionary literary studies. Indeed, it

could be said that the incredibly competent job of editing and organizing of the essays turns this volume into a kind of indispensable foundation in the theoretical groundings and the critical practice of this school. The result is both anthology and textbook. The explication of theoretical foundations is fascinating and rigorous. Evolutionary psychology is presented in all its intriguing richness. After reading just the first third or so of this volume, one will have a clear idea of how evolutionary psychology and sociobiology have waged a largely successful contestation of hegemonic literary critical practice (i.e. Theory) of the past 30 or 40 years as well as of how evolutionary psychology and sociobiology provide a new paradigm for literary critical practice which promises to be more rigorous, more fruitful and to provide both more questions and answers (thus passing a sort of Kuhnian litmus test for paradigm replacement) than now stale Theory. And yet...one reads the theoretical set-up in the first two-thirds of the text, eagerly awaiting the practical application only to be largely disappointed in the failure of the method to live up to its promise and potential. Many of the scholars make amateurish mistakes resulting from failure to make elementary distinctions about what exactly their critical object is. Amidst this unclarity, many of the essayists commit precisely the same sins as the poststructuralists they so often criticize. Like Lacan reading Poe or Sophocles, many of them seem to be reading literature as a pedagogical storehouse of illustrations of evolutionary theory, flattening literature into a repertoire of examples suited it seems for nothing beyond confirming the truth of evolution (like Nordlund's *Jealousy in Othello*). Worse still, other critics seem to be arguing that certain authors consciously or unconsciously: it's rarely made clear have given us Darwin's insights in literary form, reading Wordsworth's *Prelude*, for example, as a proxy refutation of Freudian views of motherhood and defense of Darwin *avant la lettre*. Sadly, it is the theoretical promise rather than the critical follow-through that constitutes this volume's greatest strength and provides its few rare gems in essays like Geoffrey Miller's *Arts of Seduction*, which gives a theory for the origins of arts (this it seems is the forte of Darwinian literary studies rather than interpretation, where its scientific reasoning becomes a detriment). There are exceptions like Daniel Nettle's brilliant evolutionary model for analyzing comedy and tragedy, which succeeds precisely because it has a clear purpose in terms of what evolutionary criticism should do and what its relationship to its object should be, namely, one that motivates a dynamic model which increases rather than arrests interpretive creativity. But these gems are few and far between. In the end, it is no great wonder why less than half of the book is taken up by actual applications of the theory to literature and film. I would recommend the book as an introduction to a field that, one hopes after reading this, will eventually be able to live up to its promise for providing a richer and more insightful literary critical practice.

6 of 6 people found the following review helpful. A Good Primer for Evo Cog Lit Crit Novices  
By J. Maceachern  
I was excited to get the ELF reader in the mail, but upon reading it I was dismayed to find that I already own most of the books and articles it excerpts. Most of these are excellent, however. I highly recommend this book, but scholars and readers who have already been following evolutionary approaches to literature closely might want to look at the table of contents before paying the cover price.

Featuring thirty-nine essential essays by pioneering scholars, scientists, and critics, *Evolution, Literature, and Film* opens with an introduction to the principles of evolution, with essays from Charles Darwin on the logic of natural selection, Richard Dawkins on the genetic revolution of modern evolutionary theory, Edward O. Wilson on the unity of knowledge, Steven Pinker on the transformation of psychology into an explanatory science, and David Sloan Wilson on the integration of evolutionary theory into cultural critique. Later sections include essays on the adaptive function of the arts, discussions of evolutionary literary theory and film theory, interpretive commentaries on specific works of literature and film, and analyses using empirical methods to explore literary problems. Texts under the microscope include folk- and fairy tales; Homer's *Iliad*; Shakespeare's plays; works by William Wordsworth, Charles Dickens, Emily Brontë, and Zora Neale Hurston; narratives in sci-fi, comics, and slash fiction; and films from Europe, America, Asia, and Africa. Each essay explains the contribution of evolution to a study of the human mind, human behavior, culture, and art.

A Reader argues for a new paradigm within the humanities: bio-culturalism, that is, cultural studies firmly based on biological evidence. Torben Grodal, University of Copenhagen  
This book is ideally suited for the generation of students who will have the opportunity to put up the next round of bridges, and instructors can rest assured that this volume provides a galvanizing set of blueprints. It is, in short, the state-of-the-art. Tim Horvath, *Evolution and Human Behavior*  
About the Author  
Brian Boyd is University Distinguished Professor of English at the University of Auckland. The world's leading scholar of Vladimir Nabokov, he is also the author of *On the Origin of Stories: Evolution, Cognition, and Fiction*. Joseph Carroll is Curators' Professor of English at the University of Missouri, St. Louis. His book *Evolution and Literary Theory* is a founding text of literary Darwinism, and his collection of essays, *Literary Darwinism: Evolution, Human Nature, and Literature*, gave the field the name by which it is most commonly known. Jonathan Gottschall teaches English at Washington and Jefferson College. He is the author of *The Rape of Troy: Evolution, Violence, and the World of Homer and Literature, Science, and a New Humanities*, and the coeditor of *The Literary Animal: Evolution and the Nature of Narrative*.