



The Task of the Critic: Terry Eagleton in Dialogue

By Terry Eagleton

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Terry Eagleton occupies a unique position in the English-speaking world today. He is not only a productive literary theorist, but also a novelist and playwright. He remains a committed socialist deeply hostile to the zeitgeist. Over the last forty years his public interventions have enlivened an otherwise bland and conformist culture. His pen, as many colleagues in the academy—including Harold Bloom, Gayatri Spivak and Homi Bhabha—have learned, is merciless and unsparing. As a critic Eagleton has not shied away from confronting the high priests of native conformity as highlighted by his coruscating polemic against Martin Amis on the issue of civil liberties and religion.

This comprehensive volume of interviews covers both his life and the development of his thought and politics. Lively and insightful, they will appeal not only to those with an interest in Eagleton himself, but to all those interested in the evolution of radical politics, modernism, cultural theory, the history of ideas, sociology, semantic inquiry and the state of Marxist theory.

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The Task of the Critic: Terry Eagleton in Dialogue By Terry Eagleton Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #1899171 in Books
- Published on: 2009-12-08
- Released on: 2009-12-08
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 8.22" h x 1.00" w x 5.45" l, 1.00 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 368 pages

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Editorial Review

Review

“Second to none among cultural critics writing in the English language today.”—*Guardian*

“A combative, fiercely articulate and witty Marxist literary critic.”—*The Nation*

“Eagleton is informative, witty and wise.”—*Times Higher Education Supplement*

About the Author

Terry Eagleton is Professor of Cultural Theory and John Rylands Fellow, University of Manchester. His other books include *Ideology*; *The Function of Criticism*; *Heathcliff and the Great Hunger*; *Against the Grain*; *Walter Benjamin*; and *Criticism and Ideology*, all from Verso.

Matthew Beaumont is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of English at University College London. He is the author of *Utopia Ltd.: Ideologies of Social Dreaming in England 1870–1900* (2005), and the co-author, with Terry Eagleton, of *The Task of the Critic: Terry Eagleton in Dialogue* (2009). He has edited or co-edited several collections of essays: *As Radical as Reality Itself: Essays on Marxism and Art for the 21st Century*; *The Railway and Modernity: Time, Space, and the Machine Ensemble*; *Adventures in Realism*; and *Restless Cities*. He is currently writing a book about nightwalking in cities, *Midnight Streets*.

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