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Sommario/riassunto

This unprecedented anthology asks thirty-six leading literary and cultural critics to elaborate on the nature of their profession. With the humanities feeling the pinch of financial and political pressures, and its disciplines resting on increasingly uncertain conceptual ground, there couldn't be a better time for critics to reassert their widespread relevance and purpose. These credos boldly defend the function of criticism in contemporary society and showcase its vitality in the era after theory. Essays address literature and politics, with some focusing on the sorry state of higher education and others concentrating on teaching and the fate of the humanities. All reflect the critics' personal, particular experiences. Deeply personal and engaging, these stories move, amuse, and inspire, ultimately encouraging the reader to develop his or her own critical credo with which to approach the world.

Reflecting on the past, looking forward to the future, and committed to the power of productive critical thought, this volume proves the value of criticism for today's skeptical audiences. Contributors: Andrew Ross, Amitava Kumar, Lisa Lowe, Vincent B. Leitch, Craig Womack, Jeffrey J. Williams, Marc Bousquet, Katie Hogan, Michelle A. Massé, John Conley, Heather Steffen, Paul Lauter, Cary Nelson, David B. Downing, Barbara Foley, Michael Bérubé, Victor Cohen, Gerald Graff, William Germano, Ann Pellegrini, Bruce Robbins, Kenneth Warren, Diana Fuss, Lauren Berlant, Toril Moi, Morris Dickstein, Rita Felski, David R. Shumway, Mark Bauerlein, Devoney Looser, Stephen Burt, Mark Greif, Kathleen Fitzpatrick, Mark McGurl, Frances Negrón-Muntaner, Judith Jack Halberstam
