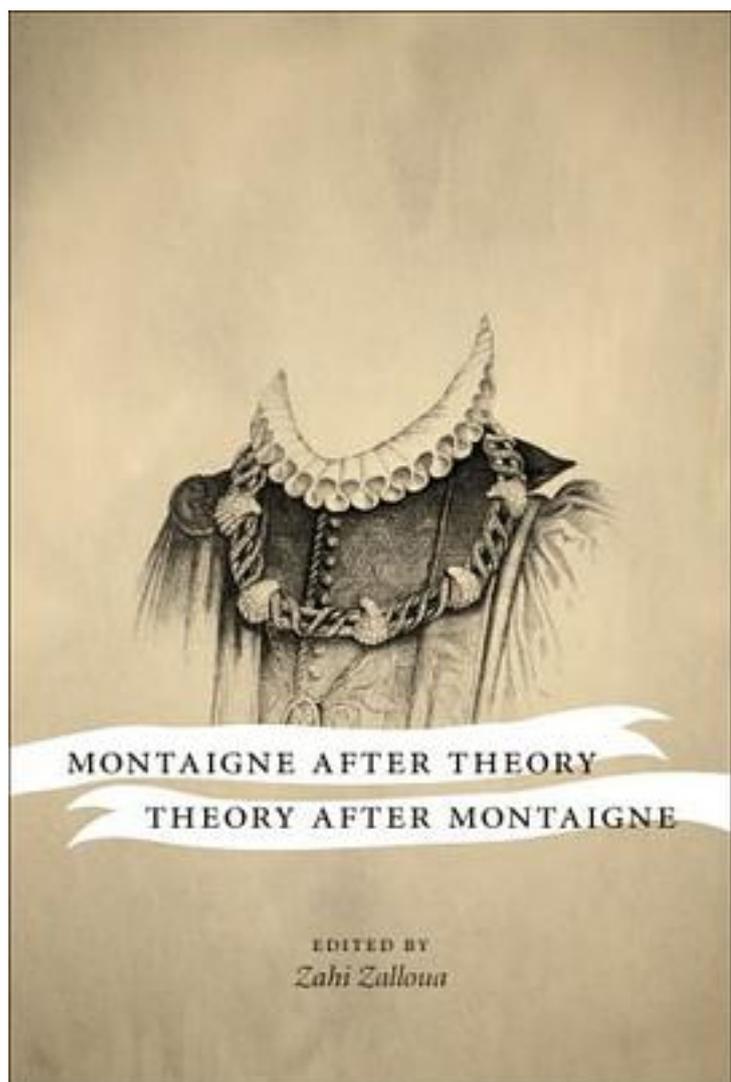


Montaigne After Theory / Theory After Montaigne



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Essayist Michel de Montaigne is one of the most accessible and widely read authors from the sixteenth century. His skepticism and relativism, and the personal quality of his writing, make him a perennial favorite among readers today. "Montaigne After Theory/Theory After Montaigne" pursues the idea that theory has altered the scholarly understanding of Montaigne, while Montaigne's ideas have simultaneously challenged the authority of the various interpretive doxa collectively known as 'theory'. Montaigne's life and writings have drawn myriad interpretations. While some scholars of his work focus on the content of the writings to define the man, others stress his playful use of language. Montaigne's complex and multifaceted works provide fertile ground for exploring themes of wide-ranging significance within the field of literary theory, including the relationship between biography and theory; the critique of modernism; a critical history of the confessional mode of writing; sexuality and gender; and, the theory of practice. The essay in this collection move beyond the current stalemate in Montaigne criticism by revisiting questions about the role of theory in literary studies and by opening up a dialogue on the validity and limitations, or use and abuse, of theory in Montaigne studies. Zahi Zalloua is assistant professor of foreign languages and literatures at Whitman College, Walla Walla, Washington. Other contributors include Edith Benkov, Tom Conley, Phillippe Dean, Andrea Frisch, George Hoffman, Virginia Krause, Reinier Leushuis, Eric MacPhail, John O'Brien, Todd Reeser, Richard Regosin, Marc Schachter, and David Sedley.

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