



## The New Humanities Reader

By Richard E. Miller, Kurt Spellmeyer

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**The New Humanities Reader** By Richard E. Miller, Kurt Spellmeyer

The New Humanities Reader presents 32 challenging and important essays from diverse fields that address current global issues. The authors contend that there is a crisis within the humanities today due to specialization within narrow fields of scholarship, resulting in a higher education system that produces students who lack the general cross-disciplinary knowledge needed to better understand today's complex world. The selections encourage students to synthesize and think critically about ideas and research formerly kept apart. This approach challenges readers to resist mimetic thinking and instead creatively connect ideas to help them understand and retain what they read. Through this process of reading, discussing, and writing, students develop the analytical skills necessary to become informed citizens. Focused on today's issues, the selections represent both well-known nonfiction authors and newly published writers and are drawn from such periodicals as *The New Yorker* and *Natural History* and from best-selling books including *Reading Lolita in Tehran*, *Fast Food Nation*, and *Into the Wild*. Students will be engaged by reading and rereading, analyzing and working with these selections not simply because they are models of good writing, but because they are also deeply thought-provoking pieces that invite readers to respond.

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### Editorial Review

#### About the Author

Richard E. Miller, Executive Director of the Plangere Writing Center, is the author of *Writing at the End of the World* (Pittsburgh, 2005), *As If Learning Mattered: Reforming Higher Education* (Cornell, 1998), and co-author, with Kurt Spellmeyer, of *The New Humanities Reader* (Houghton-Mifflin, Cengage, 3rd edition, 2008), a textbook used in first-year writing courses in high schools, colleges, and universities across the country. Together with Paul D. Hammond, Director of Digital Initiatives in the Rutgers University Writing Program, Professor Miller is developing a revitalized version of the humanities that engages with the sciences and the social sciences to improve the quality of human life by addressing the biggest problems of our time. This multi-faceted, interdisciplinary project includes designing new spaces for learning and performance; developing new curricula which aim to foster creativity and curiosity; and launching collaborative projects that seek to engage the public sphere.

Kurt Spellmeyer is Director of the Writing Program at Rutgers University. He is the author of *Buddha at the Apocalypse: Awakening from a Culture of Destruction* (2010); *Arts of Living: Reinventing the Humanities for the Twenty-first Century* (2003); and *Common Ground: Dialogue, Understanding, and the Teaching of Composition* (1992). He also has written articles on the theory of composition, critical theory of composition, critical theory, and academic institutions.

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**Edna Vachon:**

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