



Possible Worlds of Fiction and History

Lubomír Doležel

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With *Possible Worlds of Fiction and History*, Lubomír Doležel reexamines the claim -- made first by Roland Barthes and then popularized by Hayden White -- that "there is no fundamental distinction between fiction and history."

Doležel rejects this assertion and demonstrates how literary and discourse theory can help the historian to restate the difference between fiction and history. He challenges scholars to reassess the postmodern viewpoint by reintroducing the idea of possible worlds. Possible-worlds semantics reveals that possible worlds of fiction and possible worlds of history differ in their origins, cultural functions, and structural and semantic features. Doležel's book is the first systematic application of this idea to the theory and philosophy of history.

Possible Worlds of Fiction and History is the crowning work of one of literary theory's most engaged thinkers.

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