



The Unexpected: Narrative Temporality and the Philosophy of Surprise (The Frontiers of Theory EUP)

By Mark Currie

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The Unexpected: Narrative Temporality and the Philosophy of Surprise (The Frontiers of Theory EUP) By Mark Currie

Explores the relationship between unexpected events in narrative and life

Focusing on surprise, spontaneous eruption and the unforeseeable, *The Unexpected* argues that stories help us to reconcile what we expect with what we experience. Though narrative is often understood a recapitulation of past events, the book argues that the unexpected and the future anterior, a future that is already complete, are guiding ideas for new understandings of the reading process. It also points beyond that to some of the key temporal concepts of our epoch, of unpredictability, the event, the untimely and the messianic.

The Unexpected is an important intervention in narratology and a striking general argument about the cultural significance of surprise. The enquiry is developed by a range of new readings in philosophy and theory, as well as of Sarah Waters's *Fingersmith*, Kazuo Ishiguro's *Never Let Me Go* and Julian Barnes's *The Sense of an Ending*.

Key Features

An original discussion of the relation of time and narrative

An important intervention in narratology

A striking general argument about the workings of the mind

Provides an overview of the question of surprise in philosophy and literature



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Review

Currie has written an insightful, informed, and in-depth work; his position is clear and innovative. The breadth of sources he uses is a clear testament to his ambition and the scope of the work. -- Vladimir Rizov, *Philosophy in Review*, Vol 36, No 1

About the Author

Mark Currie is Professor of Contemporary Literature at Queen Mary, University of London. His previous publications include *Difference* (Routledge, 2004), *Postmodern Narrative Theory* (Palgrave, 2nd edition, 2011) and *Metafiction* (Longman 1995).

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