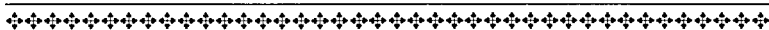


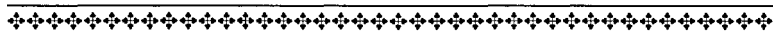
Though theory has become a common language in the humanities in recent years, the relation between theoretical speculation and its practical application has yet to be fully addressed. In *The practice of theory*, Michael Bernard-Donals examines the connection between theory and pedagogy at the level of practice. He asks how such a practice works not only to change the way we read and speak with one another but also the conditions in which these activities become possible. Bernard-Donals argues that the most sophisticated practice linking pedagogy to theory is rhetoric, but the version of this tradition in such thinkers as Rorty and Fish is never broad enough. The conception of rhetoric he proposes instead is linked to other human and natural sciences. *The practice of theory* investigates the degree to which a materialist rhetoric can reinvigorate the link between theory, teaching and practice, and offers a sustained reflection on the production of knowledge across a broad range of contemporary disciplines.

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The practice of theory

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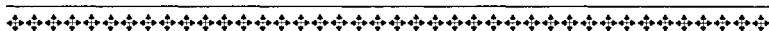
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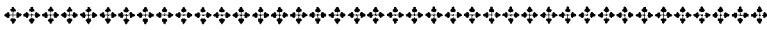
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Acknowledgments



This book is about the productive tension between theory and practice. What was remarkable about the process of writing it was that at every stage I became very much engaged in that tension. I think of myself as a teacher first and foremost, and as I struggled with the very theoretical material here, the question that kept running through my mind was, how can this material be shown to have consequences in the classrooms and in the academic (and non-academic) lives of the people I live and work with? In large measure, the extent to which this book succeeds in answering that question – in making clear the real consequences of the theoretical work involved in the rhetorical enterprise – is due to the colleagues and the students with whom I engaged in the difficult work of teaching theory.

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