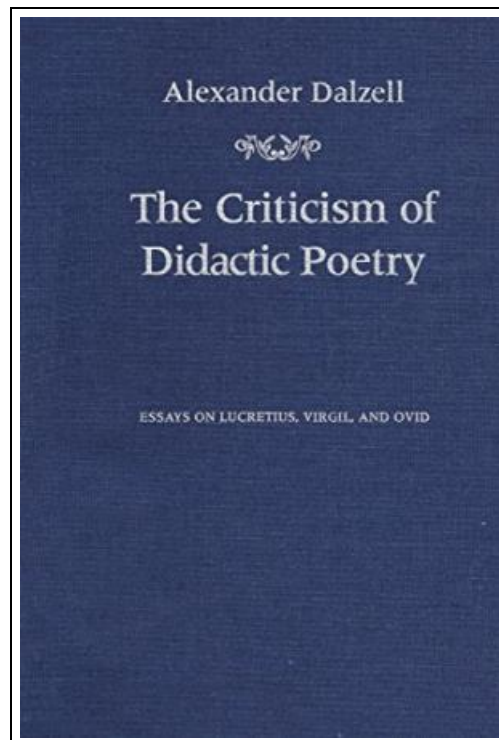


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University of Toronto Press, United States, 2011. Paperback. Condition: New. Language: English . Brand New Book ***** Print on Demand *****.Shelley thought all didactic poetry an abhorrence, and most of the Romantics agreed with this judgment. Critics in this century have been less dismissive of the genre, but seem puzzled by it. There has been a tendency to treat a didactic poem as though it were a kind of lyric, in which the focus of interest lies in the emotions and feelings of the writer. But didactic poetry has a purpose, history, and character of its own. This original and important book asks the question, What can the practising critic usefully say about a didactic poem? This is not primarily a book about theory, but a guide to practical criticism combined with a fresh reading of the chosen texts. Through a close analysis of three of the major didactic poems in the classical canon, the *De rerum natura* of Lucretius, the *Georgics* of Virgil, and the *Ars amatoria* of Ovid, Dalzell's aim is to consider these poems as a genre and to ascertain what tools are available to the critic for their understanding. He raises questions about the limits of genre criticism, the relationship of poetry and knowledge, reader-response, and historical reception. Can there be a poetry of statement? Is all genuine poetry necessarily fictive in some sense? To what extent is a serious didactic intent compatible with poetry? *The Criticism of Didactic Poetry* is primarily of interest to classicists. It will also be of great value to scholars of other literatures who are interested in the history of the genre or in the theoretical debate about whether poetry can encompass knowledge. This book is a significant original contribution to the field, with the potential to influence future scholarly...



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