

Student Essay on Literary Theory of "New Criticism"

Literary Theory of "New Criticism"

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Contents

| | |
|--|-------------------|
| Student Essay on Literary Theory of "New Criticism"..... | 1 |
| Contents..... | 2 |
| Essay..... | 3 |

Essay

The new critics approach involves strictly taking what is in the text and analyzing it. This approach is very focused on looking at the language used by the author, internally and externally, and interpreting it. A typical critic of this approach would be either an English major who knows the language thoroughly or a lawyer who knows to read documents for their textual content. For breakfast, they would eat a very well-balanced meal, with a coffee and the newspaper to skim, then dress in a suit in the bedroom of their in New York City and head off for work as an accountant, lawyer or a desk job.

The role of the author, in creating a text under this approach, is to use effective language in order to catch the reader's attention. In this theory, the author does not want you to look into your experiences and knowledge for interpretation but strictly to look at the text. The reader's role is to analyze the use of language, words and positioning and to use this to infer what the reason behind it is, and how it changes the way the text gets interpreted. The text is meant to be looked at through naïve eyes that do not take into account what they know of the author or past knowledge and experiences.

This approach is very strong in the fact that it helps the reader to understand what to look at and pull out of a work. This approach would have been very beneficial for me in high school to understand what the teacher has wanted me to look for. It helps build critical thinking skills. However, I do not find this approach very creative or imaginative. It seems to be more directed towards language than one's own opinions and thoughts on the work.