

1: Critical Approaches to Science Fiction

Science fiction criticism began to appear almost immediately after the genre was named; in fact, much proto- and early SF had already gotten the lit-crit treatment; critics such as Henry James had long considered H.G. Wells to be the most important author of his time.

Introduction to Modern Literary Criticism: Literary Trends and Influences Genre studies often focus on the characteristics, structures, and conventions attributed to different forms of literature, e. More recent inquiry in genre criticism centers on the bias often inherent in genre criticism such as its latent or overt racism and sexism. Jones applies an Aristotelian perspective to defining the literary genre of the historical novel and to analyzing *The Leatherstocking*, the first attempt to write an historical novel by author William Dean Howells, U. A Virtual Conference Session. Rainbolt, a creative writer, journalism teacher, and Ph. He concludes that the imaginative experience is "not escaping, but confronting life through literature. Historical Fiction Authors June The literal truth, of things judicial as well as historical, is preferable to any subjective one. However differently experienced by its participants, and prejudicially interpreted by their heirs, historical events happened one way and one way only. AN [Item number] The Historical Fiction of Alice Munro. Like much 20th century fiction, it can instead leave much of the work to the readers, deny them the authorial voice, and ultimately leave the complete story unknown. Most historians prefer to leave the reconstructions and ambiguities to the footnotes and cloak their interpretations in authority. But the writer of historical fiction should see opportunity where the professors fear to tread. Writers such as Alice Munro have used the imprecision of history to create a literature of uncertainty, fiction in which the author refuses to reassure us that we know for sure what really happens Compiled from the archives of rec. Historical Fiction--Rules of the Genre. NoveList News June

2: Project MUSE - Criticism of Fiction

Criticism and Fiction by William Dean Howells This etext was produced by David Widger [NOTE: There is a short list of bookmarks, or pointers, at the end of the.

Horror in ancient Greece and Rome[edit] Athenodorus The genre of horror has ancient origins with roots in folklore and religious traditions, focusing on death, the afterlife, evil, the demonic and the principle of the thing embodied in the person. European horror fiction became established through works by the Ancient Greeks and Ancient Romans. Asclepius revived Hippolytus from death. Euripides wrote plays based on the story, "Hippolytos Kalyptomenos" and Hippolytus. Cimon " describes the spirit of the murderer , Damon, who himself was murdered in a bathhouse in Chaeronea. Athenodorus was cautious since the house was inexpensive. As Athenodorus writes a book about philosophy, he is visited by an aberration bound in chains. The figure disappears in the courtyard ; the following day, the magistrates dig up the courtyard to find an unmarked grave. The revolt by the Goths , the Germanic believers of Gothic paganism , earned them a reputation amongst several early writers and their texts, such as *Scriptores Historiae Augustae*, *Vita Gallienii*. Marie de France wrote one of the twelve lais as a werewolf story entitled " Bisclavret ". Anonymous writers penned two werewolf stories, "Biclarel" and " Melion ". Much of horror fiction derived itself from the cruelest faces in world history, particularly those who lived in the fifteenth-century. The pamphlet published by Markus Ayzer is most notable for its woodcut imagery. This marked the first incorporated elements of the supernatural instead of pure realism. In fact, the first edition was published disguised as an actual medieval romance from Italy discovered and republished by a fictitious translator. Each of these novels and novellas created an enduring icon of horror seen in modern re-imaginings on the stage and screen. One writer who specialized in horror fiction for mainstream pulps such as *All-Story Magazine* was Tod Robbins , whose fiction dealt with themes of madness and cruelty. Particularly, the venerated horror author H. Lovecraft , and his enduring Cthulhu Mythos pioneered the genre of cosmic horror , and M. James is credited with redefining the ghost story in that era. The serial murderer became a recurring theme in horror fiction. Yellow journalism and sensationalism of various murderers, such as Jack the Ripper , and lesser so, Carl Panzram , Fritz Haarman , and Albert Fish , all perpetuated this phenomenon. An example of this is found in Charles S. The trend continued in the postwar era, partly renewed after the murders committed by Ed Gein. In , Robert Bloch , inspired by the murders, wrote *Psycho*. The character is said to be based on the real life Dr. In , Harris wrote the sequel, *The Silence of the Lambs*. Early cinema was inspired by many aspects of horror literature, and early horror cinema started a strong tradition of horror films and subgenres based on horror fiction that continues to this day. Contemporary horror fiction[edit].

3: Literary Criticism of Novels | Subject and Course Guides

A Books. Bower, Anne. EPISTOLARY RESPONSES: THE LETTER OF TWENTIETH CENTURY AMERICAN FICTION AND CRITICISM. University of Alabama Press, xiii + pp. \$

In lieu of an abstract, here is a brief excerpt of the content: University of Alabama Press, Oxford University Press, JML would not ordinarily comment on an anthology of stories, especially one without any scholarly apparatus, even introductions to the authors or their tales. Byatt is convinced that there is a recognizably English mode in short fiction and that it is not to be found merely in the anti-colonial: There are surprises as well among the stories that Byatt does collect: Ballard and Ian McEwan. Harvard University Press, Louisiana State University Press, Geyh, Paula, Fred G. Leebron, and Andrew Levy. Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, Designed primarily for advanced undergraduates and beginning graduate students, at a time when young assistant professors are likely to be so specialized that they know little of backgrounds and contextsâ€”sometimes even in their own fieldsâ€”this may prove an invaluable text for them, too. The need is perhaps greatest in the study of Modernism and Postmodernism. Kershner demonstrates throughout a knowing and nuanced understanding both of his subject and of his audience. His emphasis is not on individual novels and novelists but on the cultural, historical, and literary milieu within which they worked: A glossary of literary terms and a bibliography of secondary sources round out the text. Even experts are likely to find something here. Duke University Press, Manchester University Press, You are not currently authenticated. View freely available titles:

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In horror fiction, the confrontation with the gruesome is often a metaphor for the problems facing the current generation of the author. Stephanie Demetrakopoulos illustrates a common interpretation of one of the benchmarks of the canon of horror literature. [26].

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Lorem About Science Fiction Criticism Including more than 30 essential works of science fiction criticism in a single volume, this is a comprehensive introduction to the study of this enduringly popular genre. An Anthology of Essential Writings covers such topics as: Katherine Hayles, Robert A. Definition and Boundaries 1. Preface to The Scientific Romances of H. What Do You Mean: The Cyberpunk Anthology, Bruce Sterling 6. Cyberpunk and Postmodernism, Veronica Hollinger 7. The Many Deaths of Science Fiction: A Polemic, Roger Luckhurst 8. On Defining SF, or Not: Structure and Form 9. Which Way to Inner Space? About 5, Words, Samuel R. Ideology and World View The Imagination of Disaster, Susan Sontag The View from Queer, Wendy Pearson The Android and the Human, Philip K. Virtual Bodies and Flickering Signifiers, N. The Coming Technological Singularity: Aliens in the Fourth Dimension, Gwyneth Jones Technofetishism and the Uncanny Desires of A. Race and the Legacy of Colonialism Further Considerations on Afrofuturism, Kodwo Eshun Future Histories and Cyborg Labor: Clareson award in for outstanding service in the field. It is fitting for him now to be the editor of Science Fiction Criticism, a crown jewel in his scholarship to date that should resonate with all students and academics who are new to SF or involved in the study and teaching of it. I recommend it unreservedly. The compelling selections are consistently in conversation with one another, revealing the dialectical process through which the critical understanding of science fiction has matured. It is an invaluable anthology because it gathers together a range of key essays, by some of the most important voices in the field. It is a book, in short, that deserves a place on your shelves. The International Review of Science Fiction.

5: Six reasons why criticism is a good thing | Culture professionals network | The Guardian

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This particular branch of literature consists of stories, novels, and dramas based on made-up and fabricated stories and characters. In this attempt, it comments on something significant related to social, political, or human related issues. Fiction may be based on stories of actual historical events. Although fictitious characters are presented in a fictitious setting in stories and novels, they may have some resemblance to real life events and characters. Writers alter their characters very skillfully when they take them from actual life. Examples of Fiction in Literature

Example 1: The story narrates various adventures of the main character, Alice, in a fictitious land full of incredible creatures and events. Alice has to go through certain magical experiences in the wonderland. According to the story, one day, while reading book, Alice grows bored, and notices a white rabbit. She follows the rabbit when it goes into a hole in the ground. When peeping through the hole, Alice loses her balance and falls in. She floats down slowly into the hole, and observes everything around her. Then Alice enters Wonderland, where she witnesses a number of weird things. This entire magical tale is fabricated and imaginary, which makes it a good fiction to enjoy. It is one of the most famous English novels. Unlike the previous example, this story is set in a real-life-like setting. All characters are humans, and no magical or strange events take place in this novel. She not only presents the issues of the contemporary life faced by middle class families, but also daily preoccupations of the common people. The novel presents a good fiction of actual life of nineteenth century. The story of the play moves around the main character, Prince Hamlet. The Ghost elicits a promise from Hamlet that he will avenge his murder by killing the murderer. He vows to kill his uncle, but delays it on one pretext or another. Overall, the story is all about the intrigues and plots of the royal castle of Elsinore in Denmark. The story may have some connection with the real life events and characters, yet it is completely a fabricated story created by Shakespeare to entertain the Elizabeth audience of that time. Function of Fiction The function of fiction is to entertain, educate, and inspire the readers and the audience. Literature in general, and fiction in particular, is capable enough to sweep our emotions. Therefore, fiction gives the audience an experience beyond their daily lives. It provides them an insight into the life of the characters, their manners, vicissitudes, and events related to them. It also is used to point out the flaws and drawbacks of a society, race, and nation in a manner that it does not touch the boundary of stricture or criticism. Rather, fiction points out drawbacks, and then suggests solutions for the individuals and the nations alike. To sum up, fiction can also provide a vent to our pent-up emotions such as hatred, anger and dislike but in a very light manner without pointing out specific individuals or groups.

6: Genre Theory & Criticism: Bibliography

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Well, I mean, they are that, sometimes. But they can also be so much more. The idea that science fiction can explore profound ideas, or that literary works can include fantastical technology, still manages to horrify plenty of people. The truth is that science fiction and more academically acceptable literature have been having secret make-out sessions in the broom closet since long before your English professor was reading Nabokov at Vietnam War protest rallies. I hear you snickering. I just heard more snickering, but it might have been the ghost of Samuel Clemens this time. You may have varying opinions about which books deserve to be on this list. Either way, sound off in the comments. Now, on to the most literary of science fiction novels. Dick I knew you were expecting a Philip K. Dick novel on this list. Hopefully I have vindicated and disappointed you all at the same time. Classic literary move there, Mr. Buy *Ubik* from Amazon. Some pretty serious science fiction tropes there, whether you like it or not. Buy *The Road* from Amazon. It won the Arthur C. That was this book. *The Giver* has been terrorizing and hopefully expanding little minds for 20 years now. This book is unique in that it has been classified as both science fiction and romance. It either won or was nominated for plenty of awards in and out of the science fiction community. Butler is well recognized for the quality and depth of her science fiction writing, and she even received a MacArthur Foundation Genius Grant. Buy *Kindred* from Amazon. A Novel Vintage International from Amazon. Buy *The Glass Bead Game: Magister Ludi* A Novel from Amazon. Delaney This one is a doozy. In the grand tradition of literary novels, this one has left many a reader scratching their head or tossing the thing at a wall in frustration. Buy *Dhalgren* from Amazon. If you enjoy deep ideas that often require a technical, mathematical, or scientific background to fully understand this book is fun, but you still may find yourself getting lost within the chapters. Clarke Award, which safely covers both the literary and science fiction ends of the spectrum. It also seems to be many things to many people, as various critics have place it in the horror, thriller, and coming of age genres. And it has some of the absolute trippiest, mind warping imagery of any SF novel ever written. The book follows a research team studying a planet that may actually be a sentient organism studying them in return. Buy *Solaris* from Amazon. For now, this is a science fiction novel by a widely recognized literary author. Buy *Zone One* from Amazon. A Novel from Amazon. The nightmares are bad enough while sober. Column by Daniel Hope Daniel Hope is a writer, ukelele player, and unrepentant nerd. He has worked as a technology journalist too frantic , a PR writer too smarmy , and a marketing writer too fake. He is currently the Managing Editor of Fiction Vortex, an online publication for science fiction and fantasy short stories. That means FV staff members wish he would stop worrying all the time. He thinks they should stop smiling so much. Daniel Hope lives in California and dreams of writing more. When distraught about his output, he consoles himself with great beaches and gorgeous weather. He recently published his science fiction novel, *The Inevitable* , on the Kindle Store and Smashwords. Find out more at his site:

7: Horror fiction - Wikipedia

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The perception of the enlightened man will then be the task of a healthy person who has made himself acquainted with the laws of evolution in art and in society, and is able to test the excellence of work in any stage from immaturity to decadence by discerning what there is of truth, sincerity, and natural vigor in it. This is not saying that fantastic and monstrous and artificial things do not please; everybody knows that they do please immensely for a time, and then, after the lapse of a much longer time, they have the charm of the rococo. Nothing is more curious than the charm that fashion has. A few, which could be readily instanced, have been very pretty, and even beautiful, but it is doubtful if these have pleased the greatest number of people. The ugly delights as well as the beautiful, and not merely because the ugly in fashion is associated with the young loveliness of the women who wear the ugly fashions, and wins a grace from them, not because the vast majority of mankind are tasteless, but for some cause that is not perhaps ascertainable. It is quite as likely to return in the fashions of our clothes and houses and furniture, and poetry and fiction and painting, as the beautiful, and it may be from an instinctive or a reasoned sense of this that some of the extreme naturalists have refused to make the old discrimination against it, or to regard the ugly as any less worthy of celebration in art than the beautiful; some of them, in fact, seem to regard it as rather more worthy, if anything. Possibly there is no absolutely ugly, no absolutely beautiful; or possibly the ugly contains always an element of the beautiful better adapted to the general appreciation than the more perfectly beautiful. This is a somewhat discouraging conjecture, but I offer it for no more than it is worth; and I do not pin my faith to the saying of one whom I heard denying, the other day, that a thing of beauty was a joy forever. It brings us back to the solid ground taken by Mr. Symonds, which is not essentially different from that taken in the great Mr. Steele would have written the participle a little longer ago, and full of a certain well-mannered and agreeable instruction. In some things it is of that droll little eighteenth-century world, when philosophy had got the neat little universe into the hollow of its hand, and knew just what it was, and what it was for; but it is quite without arrogance. This is, I believe, the reason why artists in general, and poets principally, have been confined in so narrow a circle; they have been rather imitators of one another than of nature. Critics follow them, and therefore can do little as guides. I can judge but poorly of anything while I measure it by no other standard than itself. Nevertheless, I am in hopes that the communistic era in taste foreshadowed by Burke is approaching, and that it will occur within the lives of men now overawed by the foolish old superstition that literature and art are anything but the expression of life, and are to be judged by any other test than that of their fidelity to it. The time is coming, I hope, when each new author, each new artist, will be considered, not in his proportion to any other author or artist, but in his relation to the human nature, known to us all, which it is his privilege, his high duty, to interpret. They have always cast about for the instruction of some one who professed to know better, and who browbeat wholesome common-sense into the self-distrust that ends in sophistication. They have fallen generally to the worst of this bad species, and have been "amused and misled" how pretty that quaint old use of amuse is! They have been taught to compare what they see and what they read, not with the things that they have observed and known, but with the things that some other artist or writer has done. Especially if they have themselves the artistic impulse in any direction they are taught to form themselves, not upon life, but upon the masters who became masters only by forming themselves upon life. The seeds of death are planted in them, and they can produce only the still-born, the academic. They are not told to take their work into the public square and see if it seems true to the chance passer, but to test it by the work of the very men who refused and decried any other test of their own work. He is approached in the spirit of the pedantry into which learning, much or little, always decays when it withdraws itself and stands apart from experience in an attitude of imagined superiority, and which would say with the same confidence to the scientist: But I will own that I think the time is yet far off, and that the people who have been brought up on the ideal grasshopper, the heroic grasshopper, the impassioned grasshopper, the self-devoted, adventurous,

good old romantic card-board grasshopper, must die out before the simple, honest, and natural grasshopper can have a fair field. I am in no haste to compass the end of these good people, whom I find in the mean time very amusing. It is delightful to meet one of them, either in print or out of it--some sweet elderly lady or excellent gentleman whose youth was pastured on the literature of thirty or forty years ago --and to witness the confidence with which they preach their favorite authors as all the law and the prophets. They have commonly read little or nothing since, or, if they have, they have judged it by a standard taken from these authors, and never dreamed of judging it by nature; they are destitute of the documents in the case of the later writers; they suppose that Balzac was the beginning of realism, and that Zola is its wicked end; they are quite ignorant, but they are ready to talk you down, if you differ from them, with an assumption of knowledge sufficient for any occasion. The horror, the resentment, with which they receive any question of their literary saints is genuine; you descend at once very far in the moral and social scale, and anything short of offensive personality is too good for you; it is expressed to you that you are one to be avoided, and put down even a little lower than you have naturally fallen. These worthy persons are not to blame; it is part of their intellectual mission to represent the petrification of taste, and to preserve an image of a smaller and cruder and emptier world than we now live in, a world which was feeling its way towards the simple, the natural, the honest, but was a good deal "amused and misled" by lights now no longer mistakable for heavenly luminaries. They belong to a time, just passing away, when certain authors were considered authorities in certain kinds, when they must be accepted entire and not questioned in any particular. These moments are not continuous with any authors in the past, and they are rare with all. Therefore I am not afraid to say now that the greatest classics are sometimes not at all great, and that we can profit by them only when we hold them, like our meanest contemporaries, to a strict accounting, and verify their work by the standard of the arts which we all have in our power, the simple, the natural, and the honest. Those good people must always have a hero, an idol of some sort, and it is droll to find Balzac, who suffered from their sort such bitter scorn and hate for his realism while he was alive, now become a fetich in his turn, to be shaken in the faces of those who will not blindly worship him. But it is no new thing in the history of literature: At the beginning of the century, when romance was making the same fight against effete classicism which realism is making to-day against effete romanticism, the Italian poet Monti declared that "the romantic was the cold grave of the Beautiful," just as the realistic is now supposed to be. The romantic of that day and the real of this are in certain degree the same. Romanticism then sought, as realism seeks now, to widen the bounds of sympathy, to level every barrier against aesthetic freedom, to escape from the paralysis of tradition. It exhausted itself in this impulse; and it remained for realism to assert that fidelity to experience and probability of motive are essential conditions of a great imaginative literature. It is not a new theory, but it has never before universally characterized literary endeavor. When realism becomes false to itself, when it heaps up facts merely, and maps life instead of picturing it, realism will perish too. Every true realist instinctively knows this, and it is perhaps the reason why he is careful of every fact, and feels himself bound to express or to indicate its meaning at the risk of overmoralizing. In life he finds nothing insignificant; all tells for destiny and character; nothing that God has made is contemptible. He cannot look upon human life and declare this thing or that thing unworthy of notice, any more than the scientist can declare a fact of the material world beneath the dignity of his inquiry. He feels in every nerve the equality of things and the unity of men; his soul is exalted, not by vain shows and shadows and ideals, but by realities, in which alone the truth lives. In criticism it is his business to break the images of false gods and misshapen heroes, to take away the poor silly, toys that many grown people would still like to play with. He cannot keep terms with "Jack the Giant-killer" or "Puss-in-Boots," under any name or in any place, even when they reappear as the convict Vautrec, or the Marquis de Montrivaut, or the Sworn Thirteen Noblemen. He must say to himself that Balzac, when he imagined these monsters, was not Balzac, he was Dumas; he was not realistic, he was romanticistic. He will easily account for the bad work historically, and when he has recognized it, will trouble himself no further with it. In his view no living man is a type, but a character; now noble, now ignoble; now grand, now little; complex, full of vicissitude. He will not expect Balzac to be always Balzac, and will be perhaps even more attracted to the study of him when he was trying to be Balzac than when he had become so. Both represent their characters with the touch of exaggeration which typifies; but in bringing his story to a close,

Balzac employs a beneficence unknown to the Russian, and almost as universal and as apt as that which smiles upon the fortunes of the good in the Vicar of Wakefield. It is not enough to have rehabilitated Birotteau pecuniarily and socially; he must make him die triumphantly, spectacularly, of an opportune hemorrhage, in the midst of the festivities which celebrate his restoration to his old home. Before this happens, human nature has been laid under contribution right and left for acts of generosity towards the righteous bankrupt; even the king sends him six thousand francs. The later men, especially the Russians, have known how to forbear the excesses of analysis, to withhold the weakly recurring descriptive and caressing epithets, to let the characters suffice for themselves. But it does mean that Balzac, when he wrote it, was under the burden of the very traditions which he has helped fiction to throw off. He felt obliged to construct a mechanical plot, to surcharge his characters, to moralize openly and baldly; he permitted himself to "sympathize" with certain of his people, and to point out others for the abhorrence of his readers. This is not so bad in him as it would be in a novelist of our day. It is simply primitive and inevitable, and he is not to be judged by it. He was probably right: All this is not saying Scott was not a great man; he was a great man, and a very great novelist as compared with the novelists who went before him. He can still amuse young people, but they ought to be instructed how false and how mistaken he often is, with his mediaeval ideals, his blind Jacobitism, his intense devotion to aristocracy and royalty; his acquiescence in the division of men into noble and ignoble, patrician and plebeian, sovereign and subject, as if it were the law of God; for all which, indeed, he is not to blame as he would be if he were one of our contemporaries. Something of this is true of another master, greater than Scott in being less romantic, and inferior in being more German, namely, the great Goethe himself. He taught us, in novels otherwise now antiquated, and always full of German clumsiness, that it was false to good art--which is never anything but the reflection of life--to pursue and round the career of the persons introduced, whom he often allowed to appear and disappear in our knowledge as people in the actual world do. This is a lesson which the writers able to profit by it can never be too grateful for; and it is equally a benefaction to readers; but there is very little else in the conduct of the Goethean novels which is in advance of their time; this remains almost their sole contribution to the science of fiction. They are very primitive in certain characteristics, and unite with their calm, deep insight, an amusing helplessness in dramatization. Mixed up with the shadows and illusions are honest, wholesome, every-day people, who have the air of wandering homelessly about among them, without definite direction; and the mists are full of a luminosity which, in spite of them, we know for common-sense and poetry. After that exquisitely careful and truthful setting of his story in the shabby boarding-house, he fills the scene with figures jerked about by the exaggerated passions and motives of the stage. We cannot have a cynic reasonably wicked, disagreeable, egoistic; we must have a lurid villain of melodrama, a disguised convict, with a vast criminal organization at his command, and indeed and purpose that he lights up the faces of the horrified spectators with his glare. A father fond of unworthy children, and leading a life of self-denial for their sake, as may probably and pathetically be, is not enough; there must be an imbecile, trembling dotard, willing to promote even the liaisons of his daughters to give them happiness and to teach the sublimity of the paternal instinct. The hero cannot sufficiently be a selfish young fellow, with alternating impulses of greed and generosity; he must superfluously intend a career of iniquitous splendor, and be swerved from it by nothing but the most cataclysmal interpositions. It can be said that without such personages the plot could not be transacted; but so much the worse for the plot. Such a plot had no business to be; and while actions so unnatural are imagined, no mastery can save fiction from contempt with those who really think about it. It was still held that in order to interest the reader the characters must be moved by the old romantic ideals; we were to be taught that "heroes" and "heroines" existed all around us, and that these abnormal beings needed only to be discovered in their several humble disguises, and then we should see every-day people actuated by the fine frenzy of the creatures of the poets. How false that notion was, few but the critics, who are apt to be rather belated, need now be told. Some of these poor fellows, however, still contend that it ought to be done, and that human feelings and motives, as God made them and as men know them, are not good enough for novel-readers. This is more explicable than would appear at first glance. They have the tastes and theories of their instructors, who perhaps caught the truth of their day, but whose routine life has been alien to any other truth. There is probably no chair of literature in this country from which the

principles now shaping the literary expression of every civilized people are not denounced and confounded with certain objectionable French novels, or which teaches young men anything of the universal impulse which has given us the work, not only of Zola, but of Tourguenief and Tolstoy in Russia, of Bjornson and Ibsen in Norway, of Valdes and Galdos in Spain, of Verga in Italy. Till these younger critics have learned to think as well as to write for themselves they will persist in heaving a sigh, more and more perfunctory, for the truth as it was in Sir Walter, and as it was in Dickens and in Hawthorne. Presently all will have been changed; they will have seen the new truth in larger and larger degree; and when it shall have become the old truth, they will perhaps see it all. In the mean time the average of criticism is not wholly bad with us. To be sure, the critic sometimes appears in the panoply of the savages whom we have supplanted on this continent; and it is hard to believe that his use of the tomahawk and the scalping-knife is a form of conservative surgery. It is still his conception of his office that he should assail those who differ with him in matters of taste or opinion; that he must be rude with those he does not like. It is too largely his superstition that because he likes a thing it is good, and because he dislikes a thing it is bad; the reverse is quite possibly the case, but he is yet indefinitely far from knowing that in affairs of taste his personal preference enters very little. Commonly he has no principles, but only an assortment of prepossessions for and against; and this otherwise very perfect character is sometimes uncandid to the verge of dishonesty. He seems not to mind misstating the position of any one he supposes himself to disagree with, and then attacking him for what he never said, or even implied; he thinks this is droll, and appears not to suspect that it is immoral. He does not conceive that it is his business rather to identify the species and then explain how and where the specimen is imperfect and irregular. If he could once acquire this simple idea of his duty he would be much more agreeable company than he now is, and a more useful member of society; though considering the hard conditions under which he works, his necessity of writing hurriedly from an imperfect examination of far more books, on a greater variety of subjects, than he can even hope to read, the average American critic--the ordinary critic of commerce, so to speak--is even now very, well indeed. Collectively he is more than this; for the joint effect of our criticism is the pretty thorough appreciation of any book submitted to it VII. The misfortune rather than the fault of our individual critic is that he is the heir of the false theory and bad manners of the English school. The theory of that school has apparently been that almost any person of glib and lively expression is competent to write of almost any branch of polite literature; its manners are what we know. The American, whom it has largely formed, is by nature very glib and very lively, and commonly his criticism, viewed as imaginative work, is more agreeable than that of the Englishman; but it is, like the art of both countries, apt to be amateurish. In some degree our authors have freed themselves from English models; they have gained some notion of the more serious work of the Continent: He has not yet caught on to the fact that it is really no part of his business to display himself, but that it is altogether his duty to place a book in such a light that the reader shall know its class, its function, its character. The vast good-nature of our people preserves us from the worst effects of this criticism without principles. Our critic, at his lowest, is rarely malignant; and when he is rude or untruthful, it is mostly without truculence; I suspect that he is often offensive without knowing that he is so. Now and then he acts simply under instruction from higher authority, and denounces because it is the tradition of his publication to do so. The worst is that he is personal, perhaps because it is so easy and so natural to be personal, and so instantly attractive.

8: Criticism and Fiction by William Dean Howells - Full Text Free Book

By Kevin Paul Tracy. Some of the most respected classical writers throughout history did literary criticism as either a sideline or as a career before they sold their own novels.

Brown prefaces his novel with a page titled "Fact" asserting that certain elements in the novel are true in reality, and a page at his website repeats these ideas and others. When we talk about da Vinci and your book, how much is true and how much is fabricated in your storyline? All of the architecture, the art, the secret rituals, the history, all of that is true, the Gnostic gospels. But the background is all true. How much of this is based on reality in terms of things that actually occurred? Absolutely all of it. Obviously, there are—Robert Langdon is fictional, but all of the art, architecture, secret rituals, secret societies, all of that is historical fact. For example, a front-page article in *The Independent* on May 10, stated that Ruth Kelly, a senior British Government Minister, was questioned about her affiliations: Sandra Miesel and Carl E. Olson, writing in their book, *The Da Vinci Hoax*, state the fact that Magdala was located in northern Israel, whereas the tribe of Benjamin resided in the south. The authors also question why if Jesus were merely a "mortal prophet", as the novel suggests, a royal goddess would have any interest in him. I mean, what does that mean? Whatever weight is given to this tradition, however, there is no evidence that it was used to defame Mary, who was considered a saint to whose honor churches were built. Many textual and historical scholars have characterized this claim as being without evidence. For example, there are many mentions of women called "Mary", all designated differently any possible identification with each other notwithstanding. Mary Magdalene stands out from most of the other Marys as she is not directly associated with any man. Robinson, an authority on the gnostic gospels, has responded to this passage by pointing out that "companion" was not necessarily a sex-related term. In addition, "the Gospel of Philip is in Coptic, translated from Greek, so there is no word in the text for Aramaic scholars to consider. According to Religion Facts, the questions discussed by the Council were not whether he was divine, as the New Testament authors already believe that he was, but what his precise relationship to God was. In particular, the Council decided upon the question of whether Jesus was homoousios, "of one substance" with God the Father, or whether instead Jesus was the first created being, inferior to the Father but like him, but still superior to all other beings see Arianism, or whether he was merely of like substance to the father, or homoiousios. In fact, the Gnostic Jesus was less human than the Jesus of orthodox Christianity. While orthodox Christianity generally considered Christ both divine and human, many Gnostic sects considered Christ purely divine, his human body being a mere illusion see Docetism. Many Gnostics saw matter as evil, and believed that a divine spirit would never have taken on a material body. See Marcionism, Aeon, Archon. Early Christian devotion to female martyrs such as Perpetua and Felicity and the apocryphal writings about figures like St. Thecla seem to indicate that women did play a role in the early Church, far more than either Brown or some modern critics of Christianity acknowledge, though historical evidence does not suggest men and women shared all roles of office. Brown echoes scholars such as Joseph Campbell in saying this image of Mary derives from Isis and her child Horus. Judaism is and was a monotheistic religion, and belief in a goddess counterpart to God is both illogical and expressly forbidden. The term describes a spiritual radiance. Critics argue that this comes from an understanding of Kabbalah, which speaks of God as having "male" and "female" attributes in the Sephirot. The other known Gospels, for the most part, treat Jesus as more otherworldly and lack the humanizing detail of the Biblical accounts. The scrolls contain books of the Hebrew Scriptures, apocryphal and pseudepigraphic books, and manuals used by the Jewish community at Qumran. No definite Christian documents—orthodox, Gnostic, or otherwise—have ever been found at this site, [14] perhaps with the exception of 7Q5. In fact, there are no monks in Opus Dei, which has primarily lay membership and whose celibate lay members are called numeraries. But it may be explained by the fact that Silas is referred to as a monk mostly by the protagonists, Langdon and Neveu, who are shown to have little knowledge of Opus Dei. The word numerary is used to refer to Silas, by actual Opus Dei members such as the person at Opus Dei centre in London. Moreover, Opus Dei encourages its lay members to avoid practices that are perceived as fundamentalist to the outside world. The term personal

prelature does not refer to a special relationship to the Pope; it means an institution in which the jurisdiction of the prelate is not linked to a territory but over persons, wherever they be. Some members of Opus Dei do practice voluntary mortification of the flesh, which has been a Christian tradition since at least St. In real life, the head of Opus Dei is usually accompanied by two other priests called custodes or guardians. Decision making in Opus Dei is "collegial": Olson and Meisel respond that points of congruency can be found among many faces, which is how computer morphing of faces is facilitated. The Holy Blood and the Holy Grail The legend of the Holy Grail alleged that a sacred relic in many versions, either the cup used at the Last Supper, or the cup said to have been used by Joseph of Arimathea to collect blood of Christ or both existed, which would bring untold blessings to any pure knight who found it. In early Grail romances, graal in fact denotes a large dish for fish, itself a Christian religious symbol, but clearly removed from the traditional cup. The cup therefore presented a convenient fusion, like many of the stories that are now associated with the Quest for the Holy Grail and King Arthur, of albeit apocryphal Christian teachings, and pagan traditions. While there is a brass line running north-south through the church, it is not a part of the Paris Meridian. Further, there is no evidence that there was ever a temple of Isis on the site. This note has been on display in the church: No such temple ever existed in this place. It was never called a Rose-Line. It does not coincide with the meridian traced through the middle of the Paris Observatory which serves as a reference for maps where longitudes are measured in degrees East or West of Paris. Please also note that the letters P and S in the small round windows at both ends of the transept refer to Peter and Sulpice, the patron saints of the church, and not an imaginary "Priory of Sion. The Romans, who knew it as Lutetia, captured it in 52 BC under Julius Caesar, and left substantial ruins in the city, including an amphitheater and public baths. The Merovingians did not rule in France until the 5th century AD, by which time Paris was at least years old. Genes, Race, and Our Common Origins, writing in an article in Nature, says that the notion that a small number of people living today could be the only descendants from any particular person who lived millennia ago, such as Jesus and Mary, is statistically flawed. According to Olson, "If anyone living today is descended from Jesus, so are most of us on the planet. Astronomically, due to the location of its orbit between the earth and the sun, Venus is only visible rising in the east early in the morning shortly before sunrise or setting in the evening toward the west shortly after sunset. It is not possible to see Venus rising above the eastern horizon in the evening. Allegations of plagiarism[edit] Two lawsuits have been brought alleging plagiarism in The Da Vinci Code. Daniels granted a motion for summary judgment and dismissed the suit, ruling that "a reasonable average lay observer would not conclude that The Da Vinci Code is substantially similar to Daughter of God. Any slightly similar elements are on the level of generalized or otherwise unprotectable ideas. However, the projected court costs of over 1 million pounds outweigh or at least substantially reduce the financial benefit of the lawsuit. The reality of his research is that it is superficial. Throughout the judgment, apparently random letters are italicised and these form the message. The letters in the first paragraphs spell smithy code and the rest appear as follows "jaeiextostgpsaccreamqwfkadpmqzv". This was subsequently decoded to read "Smithy Code Jackie Fisher who are you Dreadnought", [49] referring to the British admiral whom Judge Smith admires. As with the book, this secret message made use of Fibonacci numbers for its encoding. Conference of Catholic Bishops.

9: Science Fiction Criticism (36 books)

Criticism and Fiction is a beautiful and insightful look into the fiction of the American Realist period of American writing (roughly from the end of the Civil War to the beginning of World War I).

From Edgar Allen Poe to Oscar Wilde, then great writers would often decimate their peers in papers and writing journals, eviscerating them in public treatments. Today, when two or more people get into heated, venom-laden, often imaginative insult wars in emails loops or chat rooms, we refer to it as a "flame war," but this sort of thing is not new to the journalistic world. The public loved it, so it sold a lot of papers, so the editors loved it. Back then, there was a certain poetry to the insults exchanged. Poe once wrote of Ralph Waldo Emerson that he " One could make a very convincing point about the lack of efficacy of such frontal assaults, popular as they were to the readers. It stands to reason than our best efforts in any endeavor are going to become intimately intertwined with our ego and self-esteem. This is our attempt to accomplish something intended for public consumption. We are expending effort and strain in its creation, and we want to do it correctly and in good form. We want others to not only read, but to enjoy it. No one sets out to fail, not on purpose. The man who does not care about whether others appreciate his attempts to create is a man better off dead - he is not truly contributing anything to the human condition, but stroking his own ego, little more than public masturbation. We are better off without him. Frankly I submit such men do not exist, or if they do, they are too rare to care about. So understandably we are going to feel attacked on a personal level whenever something we have created is attacked, and when that happens, any truth or lessons to learn from the criticism, however deeply buried under hyperbole and colorful language, is bound to be lost on us. On the other hand, couching criticism in too much pillowy language to soften the blow often risks obscuring the points one wishes to make, or to blunt their importance so much that a very critical point may be ignored as less important. Saying, for example, "I love your writing. Ego and self-esteem of the writer aside, the best way to make a point is still the most direct, pointed, even blunt way: And you do it repeatedly through the book. In receiving a critique, I prefer the blunt approach to being coddled and swaddled and fed treacle. And still, other writers can get their hackles up and throw a glass of wine in your face for saying it. There are those whose opinion, no matter how qualified, we as individuals do not respect, for whatever reason. I submit that the level of umbrage we take from a criticism increases exponentially in reverse proportion to the amount of respect we bear the critic: As writers, we must merely bite the bullet and take it. I further submit that to engage a critic on any level is folly. Engaging him can only make you look bad on a multitude of levels. One, you come off as insecure about your own writing. No matter how well reasoned or skillfully worded your retort, any retort at all smacks of defensiveness and lack of confidence, like you feel you have something to defend. Second, you can come off as petty, especially if anything you say can be interpreted as a personal attack on the critic. Reacting to a critique can sound like you are only reacting to the critique, and any personal opinions you express about the critic were only formed as a result of his critique, not based on any other independent knowledge or observation. Thirdly, you can appear quite arrogant in a retort, as if you consider yourself above any criticism at all, and not just this one critic or critique. It is in vogue these days on the Internet to launch attacks on someone who has put themselves forth in the public eye if only because it is so easy to do so. Fifty Shades of Grey author E. James recently underwent just such an ordeal , setting aside time to answer questions from fans on Twitter, only to be attacked by a collection of online thugs who found it funnier to lance and humiliate her publicly than to permit any serious dialog about her books. The only way to protect oneself from such a basting is to maintain some control over those permitted to participate - charge a nominal fee or issue invitations to the event without which one cannot participate. At any rate, the kinds of flaming criticisms to which she was submitted has been quite aptly described by many as appalling and uncalled for. The only effective response to criticism is no response at all. Utter and complete radio science. It is simply professional suicide to try. First, always remind yourself that this person, whatever else they may be, is a reader, just like every other reader out there in the world that you wish to reach. You must decide whether you believe that number to be great or small, but in the end you are not going to be there, reading over their shoulders, ready to

defend yourself against their reaction to your novel. So to the degree that they are honest, his criticisms are valid, not matter how they are worded, merely due to the fact that he is first and foremost a reader, your audience. Second, if the critic is a colleague or fellow writer, be grateful that this particular reader, the critic, has himself writing chops, the skills himself to recognize flaws in prose and story craft, and the language to describe it in such a way that makes it very clear to you where you have gone wrong. Thirdly, especially if the criticism is badly worded, or deliberately worded to be insulting or to get a rise out of you, keep in mind that such personal attacks say much more about the person leveling them than they do the person at whom they are leveled. And lastly, always remember that no matter the criticism, in the end you choose to accept it or not. If the project is still in development, you still get to decide whether to take the criticism and make the requisite changes to your work or to ignore it and leave it as it is. If already published, then you are limited as to what you can do anyway, and so it accomplishes nothing to take such things to heart. Even as you take the criticism of those whom you respect and admire, retain your faith in your own talent and skill. In the end it is your project, ultimately your offering to the world, and it must feel right to you, or you are not being true to yourself.

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