



Psychoanalytic Literary Criticism: A Defense

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Abstract

Literary critic Frederick Crews is self-deceived in asserting that psychoanalysis is a pseudoscience; philosopher of science Adolf Grünbaum is self-deceived in arguing that it is a failed natural science. Because both have made a category mistake, because, as Jürgen Habermas and Paul Ricoeur contend, psychoanalysis is in essence a hermeneutic practice, the arguments of Crews and Grünbaum can have no legitimate impact on the practice of literary criticism. Once these arguments have been successfully demolished, no literary scholar need exhibit any trepidation whatever in using psychoanalysis as a framework for criticism.

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