Cognition and Emotion in Literature and Film, *or*

Is Cultural Study Possible Without Cognitive Neuroscience?

(Abstract)

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A common objection to cognitive literary study is that it leaves out culture. In fact, cognitive literary critics are at least as sensitive to cultural issues as writers in cultural studies. Indeed, the real problem is the opposite—culturally oriented literary critics ignore neurocognitive and neuroaffective patterns that recur across societies; in consequence, they often fail to draw the most plausible and illuminating conclusions from their research. A striking example of this may be found in Gallagher and Greenblatt’s influential discussion of the “historicization” of hunger. Gallagher and Greenblatt present a valuable analysis. But, this essay argues, they are misled in their conclusions because they ignore research in motivational neuroscience.