"Theory," Anti-Theory, and Empirical Criticism

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People who could be described as evolutionary literary critics presuppose the validity of a scientific understanding of the world, and they believe that the biological study of human beings is the necessary basis for a scientifically valid understanding of literature. These assumptions separate them from most of their colleagues in literature departments, but the assumptions do not go very far toward identifying an actual program of research. In what follows, I shall characterize the two main parties that currently control the field of literary studies—the dominant postmodern party and the traditionalist opposition—contrast them both with critical study that orients itself to a biological understanding of human nature, and then pose a question: what should evolutionary literary critics do? This one large question contains several smaller questions. Where should we start? What guidelines should we follow? What should be the range of our activity? What kind of knowledge can we expect to produce? Is it possible to integrate literary study with empirical social science? What challenges and difficulties do we face in trying to reach this goal?

About thirty years ago, a specific complex of ideological and literary ideas began to emerge on the continent, and in the past twenty years this complex has achieved dominance in Anglo-American academic literary study. There are three central components of the complex: deconstructive linguistic philosophy, Marxist social theory, and Freudian psychology. In their combined scope, these three theories offer a comprehensive account of certain crucial areas of reality: Deconstructive philosophy informs us that the ultimate nature of reality is linguistic or rhetorical in character, and it stipulates that this rhetorical order is both self-enclosed and self-subversive, forbidding us access to any realm outside a chain of constantly displaced signifiers. Marxism provides a comprehensive model of social and economic life, including the historical development of social orders; and Freudianism takes in the whole field of individual psychology, sexual relations, and family dynamics. In isolation, each of these three theories has a certain totalizing

and self-insulating quality. Moreover, the most cosmically inclusive of the theories, deconstruction, affirms the autonomy of all rhetorical constructs, and it thus covers the whole complex with a defensive force-field that renders it impervious to empirical criticism. As Foucault explains in "What Is an Author?" Freudianism and Marxism must be conceived not as empirical disciplines that are susceptible to disproof but rather as "discursive practices" that transcend all critical categories (132). In this respect, the elements of the poststructuralist synthesis are similar in ontological status to the categories of pure reason analyzed by Kant in the *Critique of Pure Reason*. They are the conditions of possibility of critical thought, the categories without which thinking could not take place.

The comprehensiveness of scope and the self-insulating and self-affirming character of contemporary literary theory can help us to understand one of the striking peculiarities in the attitude of contemporary literary academics. In its positive aspect, as seen from the inside, one might characterize this attitude as one of poise and self-assurance, a stance reflecting a mature and sophisticated intellectual development. From the outside, as seen by practitioners in other disciplines, one might characterize it as arrogance, a certain narrow and overweening vanity, a provincial complacency that is protected by the general laxity of intellectual standards in the humanities.

The attitude I have in mind is apparent in the way critics have become habituated to using the word "theory" itself. More often than not, one hears the word theory used with no limiting adjective. It is not "literary" theory or "postmodern" theory or "current" theory. It is just "theory" *tout court*. Now, since literature is only one of many fields of knowledge, and since efforts to construct theories of literature and of criticism are at least as old as Plato and Aristotle, this usage has quite specific implications. The usage implies that no theory worthy of the name existed before this current theory; and that the current theory is therefore in some way quintessentially and uniquely theoretical. It is not just one among other possible, competing theories; rather, it partakes of some hitherto inaccessible essence of theory, an almost numinous theoreticity or theoriness of theory, something like the thingness or *Dinglichkeit* a phenomenologist seeks to intuit within any actual Thing. The use of the word *theory* without limiting adjective implies, further, that

other fields of knowledge—fields like history, particle physics, and psychology—fall outside or below the range of "theory." Whatever virtues such disciplines might possess as systematized fields of inquiry, with their own special procedures and vocabularies, and however successful they might be in explaining or manipulating the world, they still lack some special quality of rhetorical or linguistic self-reflexiveness, some savvy, insider sensitivity to the theoreticity of theory.

Such claims often resonate tacitly in the very intonation with which the word "theory" is pronounced, but the claims for a quite particular supremacy in the world of intellect have not of course remained merely latent or tacit. One of the fastest-growing fields in literary studies over the past ten or fifteen years has been the cultural study of science, and it is precisely the motive of this field to extend the province of postmodern theory over the whole realm of scientific knowledge. The confident expansionism of the field has taken a few rude shocks of late, first by the quite unexpected counterblast given by Paul R. Gross and Norman Levitt in their book *Higher Superstition: The Academic Left and Its Quarrels with Science*, and then by what will surely rank as one of the great literary hoaxes of all time, Alan Sokal's parody of postmodern science study, "Transgressing the Boundaries: Toward a Transformative Hermeneutics of Quantum Gravity." At gatherings such as the annual conference for the Society for Literature and Science, one now hears a new note of caution, defensiveness, and even of propitiation; but these notes are as yet only the reflexive gestures of pained surprise and flustered embarrassment. No substantive changes in theoretical orientation have as yet taken place.

There can hardly be any doubt about the dominance of the postmodern paradigm in current literary studies, but there is a party of opposition. This party consists largely of senior members of the profession who are still committed to more traditional forms of study, and it now has something of an institutional home, the Association of Literary Scholars and Critics, an offshoot of the intellectually conservative academic organization, the National Association of Scholars. As a member, a reader of the Newsletter, and an eavesdropper on the e-mail discussion list, I think it safe to say that the members of the organization would have a very difficult time formulating a consensus view of the positive principles that bind them into a party. They

are firm in their dislike of the prevailing paradigm; indeed, they are quite certain of its flagrant iniquity, but they are also haunted by a vague apprehension that their opposition is largely negative and reactive.

Some members of the organization are still affiliated with the New Criticism, and would thus affirm the virtually autonomous centrality and primacy of individual literary texts. They thus dislike the deconstructive notion of dissolving texts into the amorphous mass of textuality, and they dislike as well the New Historicist extension of textuality to social context. Other members of the organization make more allowance for traditional contextual study—the study of biographical and social influences on texts. Those with a biographical bent dislike the postmodern excision of the author as an originative force, and those with a social bent are made uneasy by the notion that texts only passively reflect larger historical epistemes and do not thus achieve the dignity of critical, reflective power. A good many members are personally committed to a religious view of the world, and they tend to regard literature as a medium for the play of spirit and as a secular vindication for their own sense of a transcendent power embodied in the human imagination. Scholars with this religious bent are deeply alienated by the spirit of nihilistic persiflage that animates much postmodern rhetoric.

Are there any common ideological or methodological elements here? I think there are. The common ideological element is a residual Arnoldian humanism, that is, a conviction that the canonical texts of Western culture embody a normative set of values and imaginative experiences. Postmodern critics either take literature itself as a subversive agent or regard it as implicated in the hegemonic power structures of the larger culture, and they believe that the function of criticism is to demystify such structures. All the parties within the traditionalist reaction, despite their large differences, are united in their revulsion against the subversive or anti-normative spirit of the postmodern paradigm. Whatever else they might think about literature and how one ought to study it, they feel strongly that one ought to approach it with a respect bordering on reverence. The business of criticism is not to demystify or subvert but to appreciate and affirm. Criticism should illuminate and explain, to be sure, but it should also serve as the archival medium through which a precious heritage is kept alive and transmitted to future generations.

The common methodological element in the traditionalist reaction can be identified, in one of its central guises, as "pragmatic" or "practical" criticism. Pragmatic criticism rejects the subordination of literary texts to "theory." Since "theory" now generally means postmodern theory, in rejecting "theory-controlled" readings, pragmatic critics naturally tend to focus on the kind of theory that currently prevails; but the rejection of "theory-controlled" reading is broader and more fundamental than a rejection of any specific theory or complex of theories. Even among postmodern critics, there are many scholars who wear their theory lightly, accepting it as an unavoidable lingua franca of current academic discourse but protecting themselves from any coercive influence it might exercise by not taking it altogether seriously. It is taken, instead, as a set of fragmentary and ad hoc heuristic terms, part of the eclectic body of critical terms available for local descriptive and analytic purposes. In the most practical, down-to-earth sort of critical work, the mundane business of discussing literary works in classrooms with students, most critics probably fall back on some not too dissimilar set of traditional and common-language terms, blurring the boundaries of coherent doctrine for the sake of speaking more or less sensibly with student readers. What distinguishes pragmatic critics as a distinct theoretical group, to put it sympathetically but fairly, is that they feel the need to make their theory coincide with the practice I have just described.

In what, then, does the theory of pragmatic criticism consist? In answering this question, I shall be characterizing views that I myself held just a few years ago. Pragmatic criticism consists in the belief that literary texts have a rich complexity of qualitative meaning that transcends or exceeds any specific theoretical reduction. A pragmatic critic has an intuitive conviction that the psychology in Dickens' depictions of character is more subtle and true than any Freudian premise. He or she believes that George Eliot's depictions of social life display a unique and supreme kind of insight, an understanding by the side of which Marxist analysis is merely a clumsy, hopelessly crude framework for analysis. And he or she feels that the poetic insights of Yeats or Wallace Stevens exhibit an intimate familiarity with the living power of language in comparison to which deconstructive analysis can provide at best a feeble and distorted illumination. Pragmatic critics reject theory-controlled reading precisely because they believe that the theory

implicit in canonical literary texts is a much more complete and adequate "criticism of life," to use Matthew Arnold's humanistic phrase, than the ideas available in any of standard versions of the social sciences that have been available for humanistic study ("Literature and Science," 10: 68). In this respect, then, the common methodological element of pragmatic criticism is integrally connected with its common ideological element. Pragmatic critics believe that canonical literary texts have a central normative value in good part because they believe that these texts embody the best intelligence of their civilization. The great books are, again in Arnold's phrase, repositories of "the best that is known and thought in the world" ("The Function of Criticism at the Present Time," 3: 282).

These are, again, views I once formulated as my own, and I shall now briefly try to analyze the conditions and characteristics of literary study that led me to these conclusions, these conditions and characteristics which are partly historical and partly inherent in the nature of literature and of criticism. I shall begin with literature itself, and with its historical situation. Until very recently, up to the past century or so, there was no social science. The kind of ethical and social philosophy that dealt with the problems of human behavior and human value operated within the range of common knowledge and more or less inspired speculation. This is the same intellectual range in which literature operates. The ideas about psychology, social life, and nature that are contained in literature, as specifically formulated theses, are roughly concordant with those available in the larger culture in which any given text is written. Philosophy or essayistic commentary is more systematic, but it is thus also more liable to false reductions, to the angularities of single ideas. Literature tends to work with the total lexicon of common language and thus to be more flexible and subtle in its depiction of personal and social life.

In depicting personal and social life, literature has an advantage in its very nature and purpose. The function of philosophy and science is to reduce phenomena to valid elementary principles. It is abstract and cerebral. Literature can also engage in philosophical generalization, but it has other purposes as well. It seeks to evoke subjective states of mind, register and stimulate emotional response, and give aesthetic shape to experience. It is

thus much closer to the phenomenal surface of life, to life as it is commonly observed and experienced.

The same historical considerations that pertain to literature pertain to criticism. A curious adolescent who is seeking a broad familiarity with human behavior and human circumstances might well feel that literature offers a more valuable guide than any systematic philosophy and most history. Moreover, given the very large overlap between imaginative literature and essayistic belles-lettres, students of literature almost inevitably expand the range of their studies to include philosophy and social and psychological commentary. They regard these subjects, understandably enough, as forms of "literature." The result is that critics tend to get absorbed into their subject. They have no standpoint outside of it. They have no Archimedean point of critical leverage. To analyze and explain literature, they can only use the general humanistic knowledge that is generated and limited by literature.

The tendency for critics to become absorbed into their subjects is exacerbated by the peculiarly dual nature of critical study. Critics are both connoisseurs and scholars. As connoisseurs, they share in the subjective aspects of what they study. Unlike physicists, geologists, or biologists, they do not merely try to see the object as in itself it really is; they also deploy a sensitive receptivity to the personal qualities of literary works—to their aesthetic and emotional and moral qualities. As scholars, however, critics are responsible to the same general standards of objective validity that apply to all knowledge: they seek to produce explanations that integrate empirical observations with valid elementary principles. This is a difficult balancing act. The great critics have performed it well within the limits allowed by the inspired amateurism to which they have been historically limited.

In the modern world, as more and more territory is colonized by systematic and progressive empirical science, the productions of inspired amateurism have taken on an ever more problematic cast. Many of us in the humanities have long lived with a half-suppressed sense of uneasiness at the hodge-podge hit-and-miss character of our inquiries. We have ourselves suspected that we could be judged from the kind of perspective taken by Edward O. Wilson in his book of 1978, *On Human Nature*. Wilson is a distinguished biologist and a pioneer in the field of sociobiology, that is, the

effort to extend biological understanding to include the social life of animals, including human beings. He believes all knowledge should be assessed by universal standards of empirical validity and that it should be integral with contiguous disciplines. Applying this standard to the finest literary journal articles of the time, he observes that they consist "largely of historical anecdotes, diachronic collating of outdated, verbalized theories of human behavior, and judgments of current events according to personal ideology—all enlivened by the pleasant but frustrating techniques of effervescence" (203). We should note that this chilling assessment falls, chronologically, in the period of transition between old-fashioned humanism and the postmodern synthesis, and that it is broad enough, as a methodological description, so that it can be applied to both.

There are at least three possible responses to the kind of criticism formulated by Wilson. One, the traditionalists' response, is to reject out of hand the standard he uses. The humanities, we are told, are fundamentally and irreconcilably different in nature from the hard sciences, or even the social sciences. There is nothing wrong with the way we have been going about humanistic study, and there is no legitimate alternative to it. We just have to get rid of the postmodern deviations and go back to the old ways. The postmodern response is not to declare the humanities a separate and distinct area but rather to declare that the sciences themselves fall within the province of rhetorical inquiry. The postmodern strategy is to encircle and deconstruct the standard by which Wilson would assess humanistic study. The third response, my own and that of a few other scattered proponents of a sociobiologically oriented criticism, is to accept the criticism as a historically accurate diagnosis of a crucial intellectual failure. Those who adopt this position believe that we are in a historically novel situation and that we now have before us the potential to create an empirically valid study of literature, a kind of study that would be integral with the social sciences that are themselves grounded in biology.

If we adopt this third position, we might well feel like Milton's Adam and Eve leaving the garden of Eden. "The world was all before them"—a daunting wilderness to be explored and settled (1060). What direction do we take? Where do we begin? I shall suggest three basic guidelines. First, we need to identify the elementary concepts that hold good from biology across

the social sciences to the humanities. Second, we have to hold these concepts not loosely but empirically, understanding that they are only our best approximations and will almost certainly need to be qualified, and at times even discarded, as our empirical understanding progresses. On this issue, the attitude of empirical science should merge with the prudential skepticism of a traditional humanism that weighs all reductions against a flexible, intuitive, common-level understanding. Third, we must firmly grasp the principle that all subjects of study have their own specific forms of organization, and that the study of literature will thus have to have its own categories and structures embedded within the larger general principles of biology and social science. (Even the social sciences must find mid-level principles that resist premature reduction to elemental biological principles of fitness maximization.)

Let me give one example of what I have in mind when I recommend formulating ideas that are integral across the disciplines but that have their own specific applications and structures within a literary context. One idea that is basic to biological thinking is the idea of organisms and environments. Phenotypes, the observed characteristics of organisms, are the product of interactions between innate characteristics and environmental influences. For the social sciences to advance as sciences, it is necessary that they adopt this principle and thus abandon any exclusive fixation on social or environmental causation. Despite the massive ideological resistance to the idea of innate characteristics, this kind of advance is virtually inevitable. There is now a constantly increasing flood of hard data on genetic and developmental characteristics. Psychologists and other social scientists who ignore this information are condemning themselves to irrelevance. In the literary field, very briefly, the idea of organism and environment has at least two fundamental applications. The first application is to the situations depicted in literary works. These situations involve, as primary components, the interactions of organisms with their environments, including their social environments. To stipulate this much is to affirm that the traditional categories of characters and settings are in fact fundamental categories of analysis. And to affirm even so simple a proposition as this provides us with one basic common point of reference. To possess such points is an indispensable condition for making cumulative contributions to an empirical body of knowledge. The second application is to authors and readers as producers

and consumers of literary works. Both authors and readers are organisms in environments. Hence, if we are to understand how literary meaning is produced and received, we have to acquire adequate information about the human personality and the way that personality interacts in varying environmental conditions. One primary task for evolutionary criticism is to assimilate that kind of information from biology and the social sciences, including linguistics and cognitive psychology, and use these ideas in the elucidation of literary texts, both as an end in itself—to understand the texts—and as a means of testing and refining the ideas.

If literary studies are ever to satisfy the criteria for empirical validity, they will have to include a range of activities that can be located on a scale of empirical constraint, and these activities will have to be interdependent. At the lower end of the scale, with the least empirical constraint, we can locate most of what we now think of as literary criticism. A the upper end, with the greatest constraint, we can locate the kinds of experimental study—in psychology and linguistics—that are already being conducted but that have not often been expanded to include literature. As a behavioral science, experimental literary study would affiliate itself closely with observational disciplines like ethology and cultural anthropology. Such disciplinary connections would make it possible to pose and answer empirical questions about how art functions in social groups, what kinds of social needs it satisfies, and how it interacts with other social factors. The results of such study would supply us with the basic facts for the statistical generalizations that are indispensable for causal explanations of cultural and literary history.

To engage in empirical study, we must be able to propose alternative hypotheses, conduct experiments, confirm or fail to confirm predictions, and thus falsify propositions. So far, even the most conscientious evolutionary criticism has failed to establish any method for testing its theoretical or interpretive hypotheses. The most we have done is to assimilate and integrate the findings of social science, applying them in a speculative way to specific texts or to literature in general. As an illustrative instance, consider a book that has just been published, Robert Storey's *Mimesis and the Human Animal: On the Biogenetic Foundations of Literary Representation*. Storey goes further than anyone else yet has in assimilating empirical study from

fields like cognitive psychology, ethology, and personality theory. He integrates these findings with specifically literary forms of meaning in narrative theory, genre theory,and audience psychology, and he applies his theoretical constructs to practical criticism. His work thus exemplifies the kind of program I have been proposing here. The one main thing Storey's book does not do is to propose any means by which the correlations he identifies could be tested and either validated or falsified. In this respect, his work reflects the one central methodological limitation to which interpretive literary study has been subject.

So far, our only constraints are those we impose on ourselves by virtue of our own sense of what seems reasonable. To impose even these constraints within the framework of evolutionary understanding is an immense step forward from interpretive caprice within the framework of obsolete social and psychological doctrines like those of Marx and Freud, but it is not enough to shield us from the legitimate reservations of those who take seriously the criteria of validity in the empirical sciences. How would we even begin to overcome this limitation? We need to restrict the possible range of plausible disagreement, and in order to do this we need to start accumulating experimental findings about the production and reception of meaning in literary texts.

In a paper delivered at an annual meeting of the Human Behavior and Evolution Society, the biologist D. S. Wilson has provided one striking example of experimental literary study. Wilson gave personality tests to experimental subjects, determined their position on a scale of Machiavellianism, and had them write short stories that were then analyzed for content that was correlated with their scores. Apart from the considerable interest of the specific findings, this experiment is important simply because it shows that this one crucial thing can be done: that is, experiments relating to the production of literary meaning can be conducted. Moreover, at this point, when so little is firmly established, almost any specific finding is going to offer us important implications. The results of Wilson's experiment, for example, give evidence in support of the contention that individual psychological differences influence the action of a story they write. Here is a specific instance in which a finding can provide support for a basic working hypothesis in interpretive criticism.

Generalizing from this example, we can say that virtually any psychological test that can be given to people, and any description of general traits for a given group of people, can be correlated with the blood-flow changes under specific stimuli. It is not, I think, extravagant to suggest that such stimuli could eventually include the reading of literary texts. We can identify a whole array of mental and emotional characteristics in experimental subjects. We can track mental responses to given stimuli. Could we not then also identify specific literary forms, hypothesize connections between these forms and measurable forms of mental and emotional reaction, and test these hypotheses in experimental subjects? Could we, for instance, take the opening chapter of Jane Austen's novel *Pride and Prejudice*, have an experimental subject read it while under a scanning machine, and find out something about the way comedy actually alters the brain? By correlating the responses of individual people with other data on the same people—psychological and social profiles, for example—and by comparing such correlations across individuals and groups of individuals, we could begin to formulate precise empirical propositions about the conditions under which audience response varies. At the moment, this scenario sounds like science fiction. The technical limitations of scanning do not yet allow for such large-scale study, and progress will probably come through an accumulation of more minute findings, but I see no reason, in principle, that we cannot begin to produce empirical results in interpretive criticism.

Most of the people who concern themselves with evolutionary criticism are engaged in the practice of interpreting literary texts. Such interpretations have characteristically consisted of analyses of plot and character designed to demonstrate that the stories being told illustrate the kind of behavior evolutionary psychology teaches us to expect. One main form of study that has been envisioned for evolutionary criticism is to accumulate large aggregates of such analyses. Examples would include content analyses of plots for the purpose of identifying the frequency of certain sociobiological themes, such as mate choice, parent-child conflict, kin selection, or group-affiliation behavior. One could imagine plot summaries of, say, 5,000 famous novels and plays, broken down into categories common to evolutionary psychology and anthropology, with variations graphed historically, and correlated with cultural and socioeconomic variables or variables in the

author and audience—variables such as age, sex, and social status. All of this seems to me eminently worth doing. It would give us a substantial set of provisionally stable points of factual reference. I would certainly not urge that we stop doing this, but I shall suggest two reservations or cautions about it.

The first reservation is that we need to be aware of one large and problematic assumption built into the procedure: the assumption that literary authors represent human behavior in ways that correspond to our current understanding of evolutionary psychology. To a remarkable extent, I think authors in fact do this. Beneath and apart from their structure of conscious beliefs, authors, like people in general, are instinctively attuned to evolutionary psychology. It is the psychology by which they actually operate. If people behave in ways that illustrate evolutionary psychology, and if authors offer reasonably realistic portrayals of human behavior, then no matter what the authors' own belief systems might be, the stories they tell would tend to illustrate evolutionary psychology. But at times they do not, and the deviations are at least as interesting as the normative instances. In examining the represented content of stories, we need to take account of how personal and cultural factors influence the representation of human behavior. To give a few examples, sentimental idealism, cynicism, utopian fantasy, sexual deviance, and other forms of psychological idiosyncrasy can be shown to affect the kinds of actions that are represented in specific stories.

My second reservation expands on the first: represented actions are not the only factors to be considered in literary texts. The presence of the author as registered in tone, point of view, and style, is a crucial feature of meaning in most of the texts we read. Simple folk tales passed on in oral tradition are the closest thing to an exception to this rule, but even these tales reflect a collective cultural point of view. For literary authors in a culture with more highly developed forms of individuality, the interaction between the collective ethos and that of the author—very often an antagonistic, ironic interaction—becomes a central point of interest. I would suggest, then, that evolutionary criticism should not limit itself exclusively to the analysis of represented content of plot and character. We need to pose more fundamental questions about how meaning is produced in literary texts, and we need to take account of the individual psychology of authors and the way this

psychology interacts with their particular set of cultural circumstances. To say this is not to step outside the range of repeatable elementary phenomena, which is the domain of science. It is rather to locate an evolutionary study of literature within the same range of historical sciences that includes biology and geology—sciences in which there are large general laws such as natural selection, but in which there are also unique historical phenomena such as speciation events.

In conclusion, I want to take a step back from the immediate problem of methodology and give a broader, behavioral context to the question, "What should evolutionary literary critics do?" Regarding my own case as fairly typical, I would argue that if our training has been primarily literary and humanistic, we need to engage in a long-range program of basic re-education. We need to learn more in technical detail about the common knowledge of contemporary physics, astronomy, genetics, and molecular biology, among other disciplines. Why? Partly because the truth of the modern scientific world view is in the detailed sense of an intricate and elaborately interconnected set of mechanisms. Our own sense of the world needs to be adjusted to this modern scientific world view. If it did nothing else, this sort of knowledge would give us a chastened sense of what counts as plausible propositions and worthwhile evidence. Yet further, basic scientific literacy is a precondition for engaging in any collaborative work with experimental scientists and even for making intelligent use of the findings from empirical science.

Our historical position presents special challenges. We are seeking to construct a theory of literature that would be integral with a total body of scientific and social-scientific knowledge, but this larger integrated context is itself only now beginning to take shape. While working as speculative theorists and as empiricists in our own practical criticism, we also have to work as polemicists and revolutionists, not only within our own almost wholly hostile discipline but within the much larger field of "the human sciences." At the widest level, then, we have to be reformers, agitating for a fundamental revision in the way we organize higher education. Even while worrying about how to provide minimal employment for our current generation of graduate students, we have to work toward restructuring the humanities curriculum so that future generations of students will be

scientifically literate. They would then be much less likely to waste their professional lives in futile rhetorical gambits like those parodied by Alan Sokal, and they would be much more likely to make good on the promise of an empirical, evolutionary study of literature.

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Part II

New Sociobiological Explorations in Art