

Techniques of Close Reading

By Barry S. Brummett

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In a world in which messages increasingly ask us to believe, accept, buy, and follow, the ability to read texts closely in order to gain a deeper understanding of their meanings is an indispensable survival skill.

Techniques of Close Reading is a brief book that helps students see what texts may be saying, be they written, oral, visual, or mediated. Renowned scholar and professor Barry Brummett explains and explores the various ways to "read" messages (such as speeches, cartoons, or magazine ads), teaching students how to see deeper levels of meaning and to share those insights with others. Students learn techniques for discovering form, rhetorical tropes, argument, and ideologies within texts.

This book differs from other books in rhetorical criticism, textual analysis, or critical thinking by:

- ***Focusing on the act and techniques of criticism*** rather than on schools of thought, grand theories, and specific methods, thus helping students to engage in the act of critical close reading in ways that are congenial to a wide range of methods - making the book an ideal companion to texts focused on specific methods
- ***Explaining the relationships among theory, methods, and techniques*** of rhetorical criticism
- ***Examining the ethics and risks*** of doing and reading rhetorical criticism via plenty of examples, figures, and exercises taken from everyday life
- ***Serving as a brief, affordable text***, thus allowing instructors the flexibility to assign other textbooks

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Editorial Review

Review
This book is helpful at all levels of the Communication Program: undergraduate and graduate. A clear, useful text. (Alice L. Crume)

About the Author

Barry Brummett is the Charles Sapp Centennial Professor in Communication and chair of the Department of Communication Studies at the University of Texas, Austin. He received his PhD from the University of Minnesota in 1978, and taught at Purdue University and the University of Wisconsin before coming to the University of Texas, Austin in 2001. Brummett has authored, coauthored, or edited numerous articles, scholarly essays, and books, including *Contemporary Apocalyptic Rhetoric*, *Techniques of Close Reading*, *Rhetoric of Machine Aesthetics*, and *The Politics of Style and the Style of Politics*. His research pursuits include the rhetoric of popular culture, epistemology, and the theories of Kenneth Burke.

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