

“Literary Journal Devitt Generalizing
about Genre Summary”

In Devitt’s essay she explains to the audience a problem effecting the community of writing and professors of writing, and basically the entire writing community. The problem is a widening split between the central concepts of genre. Devitt continues to explain how genre used to be a specific unique form to a specific discourse community and followed a very specific form, context, and function. Genre was very specific and as the number of specific genres grew the concept of genre as a whole split, and the similarities that connected it to those it affects socially. Devitt concludes the essay by comparing the concept of genre to the new theory. Genre was basically thought of as classification system and a “formal constraint o writers” (584) and explains that once genre is acknowledged, “as an essential component of making meaning, we might find it influencing other notions that we teach.” Devitt’s essays like the one before with her dialogue with Bawarshi, and Reiff explains how genre will enhance how writing is taught.

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about Genre Analysis”

I found out that the central point Devitt is forming an argument about is a way to unify all the splits in form and function of genre in holistic understanding. Devitt explains that this way writing would be better understood; that is if it is viewed as a unified act, as a complex whole.

I am definitely trying to understand Devitt’s theory of the new concept of genre. After reading the works of both her and other English professors such as Bawarshi, and Reiff , and even Swales... I find it a very accurate and effective way to view genre. And that is from the viewpoint of a writing student taking a writing class. I loved Devitts explanation of the old construct of genre as one that is easily fit into a container. The new construct and understanding of genre is wore a model of you could explain it as Meaning or semantics rather than simply form. Her use of that analogy greatly increased more understanding of her model of genre and made it more tangible and easier to understand.

It was also interesting in a was also interesting in a way to read Devitt qualify her stance she explains how form is important to certain types of genres within writing. Her example is of the writing of a sonnet. One who is told to write a sonnet but hasn’t any knowledge of how that particular writing is structuralized will have a hard time constructing a sonnet. Likewise, if one who told to write a sonnet and knows the precise way to structuralize this type of writing however is a lost at the contextual components of a sonnet, they would

not be able to write. Devitt cites Freadman, "In merging form and content, we do not wish to discard the significance of form in genre. But those formal traces do not define or constitute the genre. By integrating form and content within situation and context, recent work in genre theory makes genre an essential player in the making of meaning." (575)

Truthfully my understanding of this new meaning of genre has broadened significantly but it has also been streamlined. I understand the importance of and context and semantics as all components of genre. Devitts does a very good idea with bombarding and overwhelming the audience with evidence and examples, if I really felt the need I would list them all and how each provided me with a more definite understand of genre, however I believe is clear enough that I have a firm understanding. Also reading Devitt's text a second time as I did helped me understand because I found new meanings that I missed before and it reaffirmed the conclusion a previously made on the initial reading.