Critical Searches for Style in the Literature of Boredom: A Discussion on the Implications of its Inconsistent Genre Markers and Ethos

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Abstract

A noticeable trend in university classes is studying boredom in literature, a theme which ostensibly began to envelope the western canon from the 19th century onwards that centers on the artistic utilization of dilatory space. Critical theorists like Adorno call it *free time* and warn of capitalism's propensity to subvert it. Whereas boredom has traditionally been a boon for humanity in its propensity to force contemplation that leads to creativity, in modernity it has been succumbed to *en masse* and therefore no longer plays its role of detecting the human threshold preceding anger. Critical analyses have prompted many to search for a particular style of boredom, a pursuit of its quiddity in order to crack its style, which in a milieu where method and style is everything equates to numerous staid attempts. While genre identifying stylistic markers perhaps do exist in the generic sense that the plays and novels included in this proposed corpus are typically about white, privileged, and post-lapsarian moderns dealing with vertiginous existential issues, positing an exact style remains intractable. This paper, while not an exhaustive examination of the texts, posits=nevertheless that purported stylistic markers are not consistent or discernable. What is more plausible, rather, is that dispossession affects productions and critical readings. Humans all seek meaning and as it was traditionally signified in cosmologies that no longer provide import in the cultural zeitgeist of western productions about the mundane, the loss of immanence has desultorily impacted artistic expression and the ethos of the poet.

Keywords: Adorno, boredom as genre, critical theory, free time, literature, meaning, shamelessness, style of boredom

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