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Special Issue Reprint

Narrative and Performance Criticisms

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The focus of this Special Issue is the relationship between Narrative and Performance Criticisms. Both approaches prioritize stories, the ways in which stories are communicated, and how audiences experience and receive stories. Given these similarities and the shared terminology, we seek to answer the following question: “Are the differences between Narrative and Performance Criticisms simply a matter of degree or of kind?” Conversations between these two criticisms are not new. In fact, many of the initial investigations of performance were developed in conversation with Narrative Criticism. Kelly Iverson’s *From Text to Performance* (ed. 2014) is a prime example of the productivity of this dialogue. We envision this fascicle as both a continuation and expansion of the work begun in that volume. Not only has performance criticism matured and developed since *From Text to Performance* but Michal Beth Dinkler’s volume, *Literary Theory and the New Testament* (2019) and the recent *Biblical Interpretation* Special Issue: “Cognitive Linguistics and New Testament Narrative” (2021), edited by Jan Ruggemeier and Elizabeth Shively, have also reinvigorated narrative critical conversations among biblical scholars. It is at the intersection of performance’s continued maturation and this renewed discussion of literary theory and narratology that we locate this work. To help us answer this question, we have collected articles that address shared or similar aspects of each approach. Specifically, we were looking for contributions that address the areas of audience, characters, author, performer, “text”, “performance”, and “gender.”

