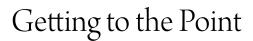
The Prairie Light Review

Volume 24 Number 2 *Reading Material*

Article 9

Spring 5-1-2004



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Recommended Citation

Walker, Russell (2004) "Getting to the Point," *The Prairie Light Review*: Vol. 24 : No. 2, Article 9. Available at: http://dc.cod.edu/plr/vol24/iss2/9

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Walker: Getting to the Point

Getting to the Point

Russell Walker

Mark Twain once said of one of his books (and this is a warning, I think) that "persons attempting to find a plot in it will be shot." I guess some writers think that there are just some stories that don't have a point, or a purpose, or even a single reason for existing. Then again, some would argue that it's precisely a story's lack of a point that gives it a point. Point being: having no point is the point. Get the point? Personally, I've always thought that everything has a meaning, a purpose, or a reason to exist. I've gotten involved in some pretty pointed arguments over the matter . . .

You see, while I think all stories really have a point, others tell me that sometimes a pointless story is just a pointless story. I usually just brush it off and ask, "So, what's your point?"

They say: We point to the point that a story need not have a point.

I say: Then, without a point, why would the author write it?

To make money.

So, then the point in not having a point is to mask the fact that his or her point is to make money? That's the point.

Yes, that is the point.

Well, that IS a point.

Point taken.

So, you get the point?

What's your point?

My point is that some stories which DON'T have a point DO have a point.

Isn't that beside the point?

No, that IS the point!

This is pointless!

That's precisely the point!

Well, what's the point in wasting our time?

To prove a point, or lack thereof -- for an author can purposely lack a point to mask the point that his only point is pointing towards wasting the reader's time.

What would be the point of that?

The point would be to mask the point that he has no point that he is pointing to because his story is simply pointless.

So the point is pointless?

Somewhere around this point I usually have to quit, since my brain has melted and slid out my ears. After that we typically just stare at each other, confused as hell, silently wondering – What the hell was the point of all that!?

You know what? Some stories really are pointless.