

# The New Criterion

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## Befuddled & obsolete

by [Max Watman](#)

*A review of No Country for Old Men, by Cormac McCarthy.*

I've discovered an alarming trend. Call it the emergence of the PseudoFuddyDuddyalists—a new breed of old men, pretending to be shocked by the small ways in which they no longer understand the world, writing as if they had been cloistered for decades. Pale, they wander out in their antique wigs and robes, their small eyes blinking in the sun, and ask what brave new world is this, that has such haircuts?

It is a strange feeling to realize that I waited seven years anticipating the next Cormac McCarthy book, and when it hit my desk I learned that in *No Country for Old Men* McCarthy had thrown his lot in with the befuddled and obsolete.

There are two characters in the book with whom the reader builds sympathy. Llewelyn Moss is classic McCarthy. Antelope hunting in the Texas desert, hiking along the ridges, he walks by rocks etched with pictographs “perhaps a thousand years old. The men who drew them we ...

**Max Watman** is the author of *Race Day: A Spot on the Rail with Max Watman* (Ivan. R. Dee).

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