Northrop Frye

by Ian Balfour

Northrop Frye (1912–1991) was a Canadian literary critic and literary theorist, considered one of the most influential of the 20th century. His theories, which outlined a science of literary criticism, have had a profound impact on the way people think about literature. Frye was born in Quebec but raised in New Brunswick. He studied at the University of Toronto and Victoria University. He was ordained to the clergy in 1939 and served as a Canadian educational administrator and professor of English. Frye was also a prolific writer, publishing over 200 works, including novels, poetry, and plays. His most famous works include "Anatomy of Criticism" and "The Great Code: The Bible and Literature." Frye's ideas continue to influence literary studies today.