

Reader Response Literary Criticism

Intentional Fallacy: Attempting to discover the author's intention (Tone)

Affective Fallacy: Interpreting literature only by how it affects you... (Mood)

Stanley Fish—Ideal Reader: is informed and responds to challenges and mysteries with relish. Is NOT dismissive of obstacles.



Wolfgang Iser—Implied Reader: Texts make assumptions about its readers.

★ Literature is full of gaps, and the experience of reading is the process of fulfilling those gaps.

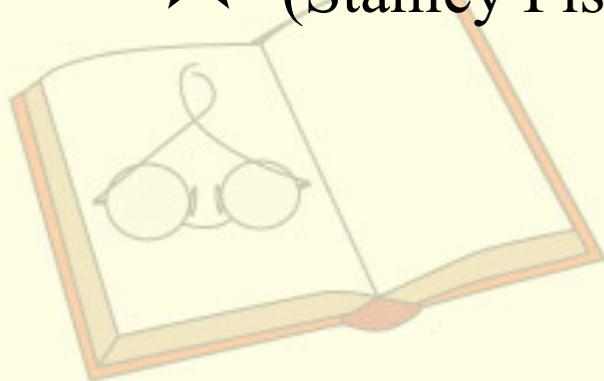
Louise Rosenblatt—The process of filling in those gaps follows a *dialogue* between text and reader.

Hans Robert Jauss—*Horizon of expectations*: the range of people's expectations and responses to a text change throughout time (as people do).

★ The words on the page do not change; our interpretative experience does change.

★ The reader's experience of the text enacts the meaning of a text (Stanley Fish experiment).

For example, a poem is only a poem because it is interpreted as a poem.

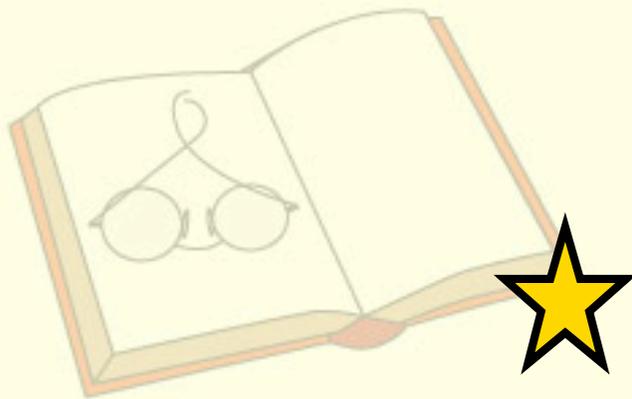


Fish—Literature is only different from other kinds of writing because we approach it differently—this is what makes it literary...

"Interpretation is not the art of *construing* but the art of *constructing*.
Interpreters do not decode poems; they make them."

Note: Conventional notions of reading poems must be followed in order for a reader to declare meaning (through skills/strategies).

There is no such thing as a *reader* in isolation. There is no such thing as a *literary text* in isolation. –Both are always a part of a larger structure.



We learn the *skills of the discipline* while in school, so that later we can apply them to a greater knowledge.

Learning takes place in *interpretive communities*. Meanings of a single text vary among interpretive communities (Marxists vs. Feminists). No one ever operates in one interpretive community alone.

Robert Parker—The literary canon changes over time as the readers who construct it change over time.

Aesthetic taste varies as the conditions of reading vary (**consumers participate in the culture they consume, and their participation changes what they consume**). Three kinds of readers, for example, will likely produce different versions of aesthetic taste, leading them to different conclusions about the text at hand.

Aesthetic taste also tends to vary with the social position of readers and audiences; therefore, *we never achieve a complete consensus.*

★ Participatory readers respond actively and critically to their reading with energy and passion.



★ Texts do not make meaning by themselves.
Readers make meaning.