Reader Response Theory

READING IS:

• TRANSACTIONAL
• TEMPORAL
• SOCIAL
• CULTURAL
• TRANSFORMATIONAL
Reader Response Theory

TRANSACTIONAL

- A transaction between reader,
- text,
- others (including the author),
- and social/cultural context
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Reader stance towards a text determines how a text is read. (Rosenblatt, Langer)
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**Efferent stance**

- point driven,
- looking for information, knowledge to use to act in the real world
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Aesthetic stance

• towards a horizon of possibilities,
• for the (virtual) experience created while reading,
• enabling contemplation of values
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Efferent and Aesthetic stances exist on a continuum.

Both can result in pleasure.
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TEMPORAL

• an event in time
• and across time
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Evocation according to Langer

• being out and stepping in
• being in and moving through
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Response according to Langer

- being in and stepping out to think about life
- stepping out and objectifying the experience
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Aesthetic reading processes according to Benton:

• Anticipation and retrospection
  – Prediction
  – Confirmation
  – Disconfirmation
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• Picturing or imaging
  – creating mental images from words on the page

• Interacting/projecting
  – social escape to aesthetic enchantment
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- **Evaluating, or valuing of story**
  - impetus to continue reading

- **Interrogating**
  - questioning text to acquiescent acceptance
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SOCIAL AND CULTURAL

- Read in the company of others
  - Fish’s community of readers
- Learn ways of taking from text
- Do what we are required to do
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• We are socially/culturally situated beings
  – Values
  – Attitudes
• Authors are socially/culturally situated beings
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TRANSFORMATIONAL

- Engaged reading
- Increase knowledge (efferent)
- Develop values (aesthetic)
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GOALS FOR TEACHERS
According to Purves, Rogers, & Soter—and others!

Develop readers
- Read for pleasure and information
- Read widely and deeply
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• Develop responsive readers
  – Engage with texts
  – Appropriate stance

• Develop knowledgeable readers
  – About books
  – About their own responses
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- Develop literary understanding
  - How books work
  - Awareness of style
  - Awareness of family of literature

- Develop critical readers
  - Awareness of social/cultural influences