

wolfgang iser the act of reading

[#Wolfgang Iser](#) [#The Act of Reading](#) [#reader-response theory](#) [#literary theory](#) [#phenomenology of reading](#)

Wolfgang Iser's seminal work, "The Act of Reading," profoundly shaped literary theory by introducing his influential reader-response theory. This essential text meticulously examines the dynamic interaction between text and reader, exploring how meaning is constructed through the reader's active participation in filling textual 'gaps' and shaping their aesthetic response, thereby emphasizing the interpretative process over authorial intent.

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The Act of Reading

By defining what happens during the act of reading, that is, how aesthetic experience is initiated, develops, and functions, Iser's book provides the first systematic framework for assessing the communicatory function of a literary text within the context from which it arises. It is an important work that will appeal to those interested in the reading process, aesthetic theory, literary criticism, and basic theoretical aspects of the novel. Book jacket.

The Implied Reader

Much literary criticism focuses on literary producers and their products, but an important part of such work considers the end-user, the reader. It asks such questions as: how far can the author condition the response of the reader, and how much does the reader create the meaning of a text? Dr Bennett's collection includes important essays from such writers and critics as Wolfgang Iser, Mary Jacobus, Roger Chartier, Michel de Certeau, Shoshana Felman, Maurice Blanchot, Paul de Man and Yves Bonnefoy. It looks in turn at deconstructionist, feminist, new historicist and psychoanalytical response to the school. The book then considers the act of reading itself, discussing such issues as the uniqueness of any reading and the difficulties involved in its analysis.

Readers and Reading

Reevaluating such time-honored concepts as representation, he sketches out a new play theory of the text that sees literature as an ongoing enactment of human possibilities.

Prospecting

Although Wolfgang Iser is one of the most influential literary theorists of the twentieth century, there is no authoritative study about his oeuvre. The present work remedies that problem by analysing Iser's German and English writings in detail. Apart from being the first comprehensive account of his work, this study also modifies the established view of Iser's theory. In contrast to the idea that his only

contribution to literary studies is the reception theory of the 1970s, this account demonstrates the importance of Iser's work on history and anthropology from the 1950s and 1990s. Instead of exclusively focusing on familiar terms such as 'indeterminacy', this analysis also discusses Iser's view of modernity, fiction and culture. As this discussion shows, his writings develop a consistent theory of the novel and the way in which it allows its readers to articulate new views of reality. To situate this theory, Iser's institutional and intellectual background is described as well, paying special attention to the Poetik und Hermeneutik-circle and thinkers like Blumenberg and Kermode. The continued relevance of his theory is demonstrated via comparisons with recent research on the novel and memory as well as examples from contemporary novelists like Juli Zeh and Hilary Mantel.

Wolfgang Iser

Critics will always disagree, but, maintains Wayne Booth, their disagreement need not result in critical chaos. In *Critical Understanding*, Booth argues for a reasoned pluralism—a criticism more various and resourceful than can be caught in any one critic's net. He relates three noted pluralists—Ronald Crane, Kenneth Burke, and M. H. Abrams—to various currently popular critical approaches. Throughout, Booth tests the abstractions of metacriticism against particular literary works, devoting a substantial portion of his discussion to works by W. H. Auden, Henry James, Oliver Goldsmith, and Anatole France.

Critical Understanding

The pioneer of "literary anthropology," Wolfgang Iser presents a wide-ranging and comprehensive exploration of this new field in an attempt to explain the human need for the "particular form of make-believe" known as literature. Ranging from the Renaissance pastoral to Coleridge to Sartre and Beckett, *The Fictive and the Imaginary* is a distinguished work of scholarship from one of Europe's most respected and influential critics.

The Fictive and the Imaginary

Preface p. ix 1. Introduction p. 1 The Marketplace of Interpretation p. 1 Interpretation as Translatability p. 5 2. The Authority of the Canon p. 13 Canonization and Midrash p. 13 The Literary Canon: Dr. Johnson on Shakespeare p. 28 3. The Hermeneutic Circle p. 41 Friedrich Daniel Ernst Schleiermacher: Self-Reflective Circularity p. 41 Johann Gustav Droysen: The Nesting of Circles p. 55 Paul Ricoeur: Transactional Loops p. 69 4. The Recursive Loop p. 83 Recursion in Ethnographic Discourse p. 83 Systemic Recursion p. 99 5. The Traveling Differential: Franz Rosenzweig, The Star of Redemption p. 113 "The Birth of the Elements Out of the Sombre Foundations of Nought" p. 113 Proliferating Translatability p. 134 6. Configurations of Interpretation: An Epilogue p. 145 Appendix p. 159 The Emergence of a Cross-Cultural Discourse: Thomas Carlyle's *Sartor Resartus* p. 159 Enfoldings in Paterian Discourse: Modes of Translatability p. 181 Index p. 201.

The Range of Interpretation

Hoy shows that it is possible to bring the French, German, and Anglo- American critical traditions into meaningful relationship without blurring the distinctions that separate them. ... For an understanding of Gadamer's relevance to current criticism, his book is indispensable; many will find it useful as a synoptic account of the critical theories that have become prominent. -- *Comparative Literature*.--Page 4 of cover.

The Critical Circle

More than half a century after its translation into English, Erich Auerbach's *Mimesis* remains a masterpiece of literary criticism. A brilliant display of erudition, wit, and wisdom, his exploration of how great European writers from Homer to Virginia Woolf depicted reality has taught generations how to read Western literature. This new expanded edition includes a substantial essay in introduction by Edward Said as well as an essay, never before translated into English, in which Auerbach responds to his critics. A German Jew, Auerbach was forced out of his professorship at the University of Marburg in 1935. He left for Turkey, where he taught at the state university in Istanbul. There he wrote *Mimesis*, publishing it in German after the end of the war. Displaced as he was, Auerbach produced a work of great erudition that contains no footnotes, basing his arguments instead on searching, illuminating readings of key passages from his primary texts. His aim was to show how from antiquity to the twentieth century literature progressed toward ever more naturalistic and democratic forms of

representation. This essentially optimistic view of European history now appears as a defensive--and impassioned--response to the inhumanity he saw in the Third Reich. Ranging over works in Greek, Latin, Spanish, French, Italian, German, and English, Auerbach used his remarkable skills in philology and comparative literature to refute any narrow form of nationalism or chauvinism, in his own day and ours. For many readers, both inside and outside the academy, *Mimesis* is among the finest works of literary criticism ever written. This Princeton Classics edition includes a substantial introduction by Edward Said as well as an essay in which Auerbach responds to his critics.

Mimesis

Originally published: Australia: Giramondo, 2013.

The Swan Book

Bringing his perennially popular course to the page, Yale University Professor Paul H. Fry offers in this welcome book a guided tour of the main trends in twentieth-century literary theory. At the core of the book's discussion is a series of underlying questions: What is literature, how is it produced, how can it be understood, and what is its purpose? Fry engages with the major themes and strands in twentieth-century literary theory, among them the hermeneutic circle, New Criticism, structuralism, linguistics and literature, Freud and fiction, Jacques Lacan's theories, the postmodern psyche, the political unconscious, New Historicism, the classical feminist tradition, African American criticism, queer theory, and gender performativity. By incorporating philosophical and social perspectives to connect these many trends, the author offers readers a coherent overall context for a deeper and richer reading of literature.

Theory of Literature

This succinct introduction to modern theories of literature and the arts demonstrates how each theory is built and what it can accomplish. Represents a wide variety of theories, including phenomenological theory, hermeneutical theory, gestalt theory, reception theory, semiotic theory, Marxist theory, deconstruction, anthropological theory, and feminist theory. Uses classic literary texts, such as Keats's *Ode on a Grecian Urn*, Spenser's *The Shepheard's Calender* and T. S. Eliot's *The Waste Land* to illustrate his explanations. Includes key statements by the major proponents of each theory. Presents the different theories objectively, allowing students to decide which if any, they subscribe to. Gives students a sense of the potential of theory. Includes a glossary of technical terms.

How to Do Theory

"Reader-Response Criticism: From Formalism to Post-Structuralism" collects the most important theoretical statements on readers and the reading process. Its essays trace the development of reader-response criticism from its beginnings in New Criticism through its appearance in structuralism, stylistics, phenomenology, psychoanalytic criticism, and post-structuralist theory. The editor shows how each of these essays treats the problem of determinate meaning and compares their unspoken moral assumptions. In a concluding essay, she redefines the reader-response movement by placing it in historical perspective, providing the first short history of the concept of literary response. This anthology remains an indispensable guide to reader-response criticism. -- From publisher's description.

Reader-Response Criticism

Pinpointing a flaw in prevailing economic practices that explains why so many families in the richest nation on earth are mired in poverty, homelessness, joblessness, and hunger, this study suggests that a reform is available to correct this flaw that is corroding the enterprise system. This flaw is widely accepted and enshrined in law; certain taxation and land policies enable a powerful few to skim off a large share of the wealth created by the mass of citizens. How this injustice plays a major role in generating destructive boom and bust cycles is important, but the overprivileged who benefit from "legalized theft" are not vilified. Rather, the book calls for correcting the public policies that make slum ownership, land speculation, and other forms of parasitic and exploitive behavior more profitable than honest labor and productive enterprise. Accounts of places in the United States and elsewhere that are applying the proposed reform are presented, proving that it is politically feasible, and offers an ethical cleansing of the economy so that all people can enjoy all the fruits of their efforts.

Stepping Forward

This long-awaited translation of *Das literarische Kunstwerk* makes available for the first time in English Roman Ingarden's influential study. Though it is inter-disciplinary in scope, situated as it is on the borderlines of ontology and logic, philosophy of literature and theory of language, Ingarden's work has a deliberately narrow focus: the literary work, its structure and mode of existence. The *Literary Work of Art* establishes the groundwork for a philosophy of literature, i.e., an ontology in terms of which the basic general structure of all literary works can be determined. This "essential anatomy" makes basic tools and concepts available for rigorous and subtle aesthetic analysis.

Cognition of the Literary Work of Art

This book is one of those rare combinations of intellectual brilliance, stylistic clarity, and sheer verve. The book contains a series of major works of American short fiction by Edgar Allan Poe, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Herman Melville, and Henry James as occasions for a mode of reading in which the readers aim is to establish an intimate relationship with the special arrangement of words in a text, governed by a trust in a happy coincidence of moments in which one might recognize the words relevance to ones life. Dr. Kllay calls this a good encounter, a term she adopts from the writings of philosopher Stanley Cavell. In her detailed, theoretical introduction, Dr. Kllay lays bare her scholarly debt, primarily to the writings of Cavell himself and to the work of literary critic Wolfgang Iser, as she further develops and clarifies the idea of the good encounter. Here she identifies the good encounter with a particular trope, which appears within the tales themselves, and which also

Going Home Through Seven Paths to Nowhere

This book offers a valuable contribution to the practice of literary criticism and cultural studies by seeking to explore "transgression" as a literary theme. Based on the analyses of six representative twentieth century novels, it deals with the fictional representation of various transgressive acts, from murder and incest to forbidden love affairs and adultery. A detailed consideration of major reader-response theories establishes a useful context for the textual analyses, as the readers are encouraged to integrate knowledge about style, narrative structure, and formal interpretive strategies with knowledge about social norms and moral values embedded in each text. Focusing on the evolving relationship between text and reader, the book exposes the potential of narrative strategies revealed in the act of narrating a story in an unconventional manner. "Broken" narratives, "unreliable narrators", and "self-referentiality" are only some of the features discussed in the book with the aim of stimulating the readers to reflect on the narrative complexity of the twentieth century novel and to question their reading expectations. Designed for use in small and large classes organized by Literature, Comparative Literature and Cultural Studies Departments in colleges and universities around the world, this systematic, in-depth novel study aims to increase the students' capacity to interpret challenging narrative texts, appreciate the aesthetic value of world literature, and experience the pleasure of reading beyond the limits of their own field.

Transgression, Stylistic Variation and Narrative Discourse in the Twentieth Century Novel

Modern British and Irish Criticism and Theory offers the student and general reader a comprehensive, critically informed overview of the development of literary and cultural studies from the nineteenth century to the present day. Beginning with Coleridge and Arnold, examining the contribution of cultural commentators and novelists, and considering the institutionalisation of literary criticism in the universities of England, Ireland, Scotland, and Wales, the book addresses in detailed, accessible and rigorous essays the rise and significance of literary and cultural studies. Nearly thirty essays contribute to an understanding of the practice of literary studies presenting the reader with a perceptive series of critical interventions which, themselves, engage in the very locations from which criticism and theory have emerged. A further reading list accompanies each chapter.

Modern British and Irish Criticism and Theory

The Principles and Practice of Narrative Medicine articulates the ideas, methods, and practices of narrative medicine. Written by the originators of the field, this book provides the authoritative starting place for any clinicians or scholars committed to learning of and eventually teaching or practicing narrative medicine.

The Principles and Practice of Narrative Medicine

The last half of the twentieth century has seen the emergence of literary theory as a new discipline. As with any body of scholarship, various schools of thought exist, and sometimes conflict, within it. I.R. Makaryk has compiled a welcome guide to the field. Accessible and jargon-free, the *Encyclopedia of Contemporary Literary Theory* provides lucid, concise explanations of myriad approaches to literature that have arisen over the past forty years. Some 170 scholars from around the world have contributed their expertise to this volume. Their work is organized into three parts. In Part I, forty evaluative essays examine the historical and cultural context out of which new schools of and approaches to literature arose. The essays also discuss the uses and limitations of the various schools, and the key issues they address. Part II focuses on individual theorists. It provides a more detailed picture of the network of scholars not always easily pigeonholed into the categories of Part I. This second section analyses the individual achievements, as well as the influence, of specific scholars, and places them in a larger critical context. Part III deals with the vocabulary of literary theory. It identifies significant, complex terms, places them in context, and explains their origins and use. Accessibility is a key feature of the work. By avoiding jargon, providing mini-bibliographies, and cross-referencing throughout, Makaryk has provided an indispensable tool for literary theorists and historians and for all scholars and students of contemporary criticism and culture.

Encyclopedia of Contemporary Literary Theory

"Focusing on five poets of the New York literary scene in the period between 1910 and 1940, the author shows that fractioned ethnic and immigrant groups could locate democratic communities through innovative poetic forms in which belonging was produced not by identity narratives but through attention directed to particular genres"--

Situating Poetry

From Mark Z Danielewski, author of the cult bestseller *House of Leaves*, comes the astonishing *Only Revolutions*, a shoot-from-the-hip American road novel about Sam and Hailey - two wayward and wild kids who magically career across the American mainland and from the Civil Rights Movement to the Iraq War and beyond. Powered by an ever-evolving fleet of cars, these two teenagers never age and never stop. They crash parties in New Orleans, barrel up the Mississippi, and blast through the Badlands, cutting a nation in half as they try to outrace History itself. And where this journey takes them is what sets the pages, even the actual book, turning. Alternating between Hailey and Sam, this kaleidoscopic novel spins the strangest, most gripping and lyrical love story published in more than a generation.

Only Revolutions

The Performance of Reading argues that there are distinct analogies between "silent" reading and artistic performance, and so fashions the new role of the reader as performer. An original and insightful exploration of the act of reading by the leading scholar in the field. Discusses the history of reading and the transitions from reading aloud to reading silently, and the changing role of literature as communal, active experience to a more private endeavor.

The Performance of Reading

New technologies are changing our reading habits. Laptops, e-readers, tablets and other handheld devices supply new platforms for reading, and we must learn to manage them by scrolling, clicking or tapping. *Reading Today* places reading in current literary and cultural contexts in order to analyse how these contexts challenge our conceptions of who reads, what reading is, how we read, where we read, and for what purposes – and then responds to the questions this analysis raises. Is our reading experience becoming a 'flat' one? And does reading in a media environment favour quick reading? Alongside these questions, the contributors unpack emerging strategies of reading. They consider, for example, how paying attention to readers' emotional reactions as an indispensable component of reading affects our conception of the reading process. Other chapters consider how reading can be explored through such topics as experimental literature, the contemporary encyclopedic novel and the healing power of books.

Reading Today

Unsurpassed as a text for upper-division and beginning graduate students, Raman Selden's classic text is the liveliest, most readable and most reliable guide to contemporary literary theory. Includes applications of theory, cross-referenced to Selden's companion volume, *Practicing Theory and Reading Literature*.

A Reader's Guide to Contemporary Literary Theory

Research Paper (postgraduate) from the year 1999 in the subject English - Literature, Works, , course: Third-Cycle Education / Tercer Ciclo, language: English, abstract: This study analyses the act of reading *The Picture of Dorian Gray* from the perspective of Reception Theory. In his critical writings, Oscar Wilde asserts that the receiver of a work of art must play a dynamic role in the construction of its meaning, and the analysis of his only novel shows that Wilde encourages the reader to participate actively in its production in order to be able to find out the lesson which is inherent in it. As a result, the research shows that *The Picture of Dorian Gray* is representative of Wilde's aesthetic principles not only because it promotes the individuality of the reader but also because the moral in it is subordinated to its artistic effects.

Writing and Reading

"Bringing together eighteenth-century legal discourse and prose fiction, the author gives a cross-disciplinary account of immigration history. She tells a revisionist history in which, for jurists, philosophers, and fiction writers, naturalization is a creative mechanism for national expansion"--

The Act of Reading *The Picture of Dorian Gray* by Oscar Wilde

An exploration of the possibilities of hypertext fiction as art form and entertainment

Before Borders

Within this text, first published in German in 1960, the influential German literary scholar Wolfgang Iser writes engagingly of Pater's aesthetic.

The End of Books--or Books Without End?

Who cares about details? As Naomi Schor explains in her highly influential book, we do—but it has not always been so. The interest in detail—in art, in literature, and as an aesthetic category—is the product of the decline of classicism and the rise of realism. But the story of the detail is as political as it is aesthetic. Secularization, the disciplining of society, the rise of consumerism, the invention of the quotidian, have all brought detail to the fore. In this classic work of aesthetic and feminist theory, now available in a new paperback edition, Schor provides ways of thinking about details and ornament in literature, art, and architecture, and uncovering the unspoken but powerful ideologies that attached gender to details. Wide-ranging and richly argued, *Reading in Detail* presents ideas about reading (and viewing) that will enhance the study of literature and the arts.

Walter Pater

Perhaps no other critical label has been made to cover more ground than "irony," and in our time irony has come to have so many meanings that by itself it means almost nothing. In this work, Wayne C. Booth cuts through the resulting confusions by analyzing how we manage to share quite specific ironies—and why we often fail when we try to do so. How does a reader or listener recognize the kind of statement which requires him to reject its "clear" and "obvious" meaning? And how does any reader know where to stop, once he has embarked on the hazardous and exhilarating path of rejecting "what the words say" and reconstructing "what the author means"? In the first and longer part of his work, Booth deals with the workings of what he calls "stable irony," irony with a clear rhetorical intent. He then turns to intended instabilities—ironies that resist interpretation and finally lead to the "infinite absolute negativities" that have obsessed criticism since the Romantic period. Professor Booth is always ironically aware that no one can fathom the unfathomable. But by looking closely at unstable ironists like Samuel Becket, he shows that at least some of our commonplaces about meaninglessness require revision. Finally, he explores—with the help of Plato—the wry paradoxes that threaten any uncompromising assertion that all assertion can be undermined by the spirit of irony.

Reading in Detail

Stanley Fish is one of America's most stimulating literary theorists. In this book, he undertakes a profound reexamination of some of criticism's most basic assumptions. He penetrates to the core of the modern debate about interpretation, explodes numerous misleading formulations, and offers a stunning proposal for a new way of thinking about the way we read. Fish begins by examining the relation between a reader and a text, arguing against the formalist belief that the text alone is the basic, knowable, neutral, and unchanging component of literary experience. But in arguing for the right of the reader to interpret and in effect create the literary work, he skillfully avoids the old trap of subjectivity. To claim that each reader essentially participates in the making of a poem or novel is not, he shows, an invitation to unchecked subjectivity and to the endless proliferation of competing interpretations. For each reader approaches a literary work not as an isolated individual but as part of a community of readers. "Indeed," he writes, "it is interpretive communities, rather than either the text or reader, that produce meanings." The book is developmental, not static. Fish at all times reveals the evolutionary aspect of his work—the manner in which he has assumed new positions, altered them, and then moved on. Previously published essays are introduced by headnotes which relate them to the central notion of interpretive communities as it emerges in the final chapters. In the course of refining his theory, Fish includes rather than excludes the thinking of other critics and shows how often they agree with him, even when he and they may appear to be most dramatically at odds. Engaging, lucid, provocative, this book will immediately find its place among the seminal works of modern literary criticism.

A Rhetoric of Irony

Reading Material in Early Modern England rediscovers the practices and representations of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century English readers. By telling their stories and insisting upon their variety, Brayman Hackel displaces both the singular 'ideal' reader of literacy theory and the elite male reader of literacy history.

Is There a Text in This Class?

Drawing on their respective roles as a school library media specialist and a psychologist, these authors present a comprehensive five-step model of bibliotherapy. They explore how it can be used to match the nature and prevalence of the mental health needs of children and young adults. Within the five steps, activities that comprise diverse bibliotherapy programs are described and competencies necessary for bibliotherapy practice are examined. Extensive references to the professional literature and a sample program that reflects the team-based planning process advocated by the authors conclude this invaluable resource.

Reading Material in Early Modern England

In *Interpretive Conventions*, Steven Mailloux provides a general introduction to reader-response criticism while developing his own specific reader-oriented approach to literature. He examines five influential theories of the reading process—those of Stanley Fish, Jonathan Culler, Wolfgang Iser, Norman Holland, and David Bleich. He goes on to argue the need for a more comprehensive reader-response criticism based on a consistent social model of reading. He develops such a reading model and also discusses American textual editing and literary history.

Bibliotherapy with Young People

"When the present flurry of works on theory of narrative fiction comes to an end ... this seems likely to be one of the survivors."-Frank Kermode, *Times Literary Supplement*. "Well-written, scholarly, perceptive... . A basic framework for a rational theory of literary effects and responses based on the novel."-*Library Journal*.

Interpretive Conventions

Unsurpassed as a text for upper-division and beginning graduate students, Raman Selden's classic text is the liveliest, most readable and most reliable guide to contemporary literary theory. Includes applications of theory, cross-referenced to Selden's companion volume, *Practicing Theory and Reading Literature*.

The Implied Reader

First Published in 2002. Routledge is an imprint of Taylor & Francis, an informa company.

A Reader's Guide to Contemporary Literary Theory

Return Of Reader