



New Directions in American Reception Study

Philip Goldstein, James L. Machor

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Contemporary reception study has developed a diversity of approaches and methods, including the institutional, textual, historical, authorial, and reader-response, which, to a greater or lesser extent, acknowledge the various ways in which readers have found texts-- literature, television shows, movies, and newspapers--meaningful. This collection emphasizes that new diversity, examining movies, newspapers, fans, television shows, and traditional American as well as modern Hispanic, Black, and Women's literature. The essays on literature include James Machor on Melville's short fiction, Kenneth Roemer on Edward Bellamy's utopian work *Looking Backward*, Amy Blair on the popularity of Sinclair Lewis's *Main Street*, Marcial Gonzalez on Danny Santiago and his Hispanic novel *Famous All Over Town*, and Leonard Diepeveen on modernist fiction and criticism. The theoretical essays on reader-oriented criticism include Patsy Schweickart on interpretation and the ethics of care and Jack Bratich on active audiences. Media versions of response criticism include Andrea Press and Camille Johnson's ethnographic analysis of fans of the *Oprah Winfrey Show*, Janet Staiger on Robert Aldrich's film version of Mickey Spillane's *Kiss Me Deadly*, and Rhiannon Bury on the fans of the HBO television show *Six Feet Under*. History-of-the-book versions include Barbara Hochman on the popularity of the 1890s editions of Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, Ellen Garvey on nineteenth-century scrapbooks of newspaper, and David Nord on early twentieth-century newspapers' relations to audience charges of bias and unfairness. Poststructuralist studies include Philip Goldstein on Richard Wright's *Native Son*, Steve Mailloux on *Reading Lolita in Tehran*, and Tony Bennett on the cultural analyses of Pierre Bourdieu. The collection concludes with essays by Janice Radway on the limits of these methods and on the possibility of new forms of sociological and anthropological reception study and by Toby Miller on the "reception deception" in relation to the worldwide distribution and reception of movies and television shows.

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