

Bureaucracy:

Sorry about class. Consensus seems to be making it up slowly.
aol e-address for Jenna

Discussion:

11. March 24. What is the "content" of a literary work? What is "meaning"? How does literature mean? Or does it? <!Notes for this session are now> <!A href="brnbk411.pdf"><!online>

Discussion:

What is "content" in literature?
What is "meaning" in literature?
Who makes the meaning? Who decides what this is "about"?
Why do we enjoy poems, plays, stories, or movies?

Reading:

What is "content" in literature?

Holland, "What Is Content?" Online. 29 pp.

2 components -- what are they?

1. Filling in gaps. Rezeptionsästhetik.

This includes unconscious fantasies.

2. Expanding language.

Displacement to language. What is this in the brain?

Probably language behaving in unusual ways.

Recent paper on laughter. Brain Works. CHK. Photocopy. Right hemisphere & jokes.

Sharpe, "Psycho-Physical Problems." Handout. 15 pp.

1. Do you believe her?

Sharpe's hang-up: control of orifices.

Theories follow hang-ups! zinn's experience in psychoanalysis?

2. Will brain technology ever be able to do this kind of listening?

3. Metaphor a right-brain phenomenon (as in Faust paper).

4. Some indication that right hemisphere is dominant for unconscious? Not clear at all.

jokes are a right hemisphere phenomenon. Luria's law of lateralization.

Holland, "The Barge She Sat In." Online.

1. Note discrepancy between this kind of detailed analysis of language and what brain scans can do.

2. Basic principle: you can infer person's character from their choices of words.

a. Analysis of Falstaff: a good way to analyze a literary/dramatic character. Actors use.

3. Cp. this kind of listening with Sharpe's. Pattern vs. isolated word.

Holland, "Form as Defense." From old Dynamics. Online. No, you have already read this.

Gist: by controlling attention and perception, form operates like a defense mechanism.

These papers suggest that particular figures of speech operate to express both defense & fantasy (Sharpe very clear on this dual function.)

Holland, "The Displacement to Language," From old Dynamics. Online.

Grammatically deviant, degrees of grammaticalness: unusual language calls attention.

Johnson & Pope: does sound dictate sense? No, says Johnson. nnh: "Form manages content." (nnh not yet a reader-response critic.) Now: form manages attention & perception.

Morse Peckham: works of art disorient us. Cp. Shklovskii. "Defamiliarization."

Form taken in three ways:

 motoric

 pseudo-logical mastery

 gratify & violate expectations

Holland, "Meaning as Defense." From old Dynamics. Also online.

"The puzzling movies." A genre of the time. Now? David Lynch?

The promise of a point justifies maybe-illicit pleasures.

Meaning as mastery of the disorientation in form. "Make sense" vs. critics' complicated interpretations.

Meaning as analogous to sublimation.

Failure to supply meaning leads us to intellection, away from emotion and experience.

12. March 31. How does a text mean? Or does it? And why do we enjoy literature?

Discussion:

How does literature "mean"?

Who makes meaning?

Why do we enjoy literature?

Why do we laugh?

What makes language pleasurable or "literary"?

Reading :

Reading: Holland, "How Does Literature Mean?" Online, 30 pp.

Holland, "Laughers Laughing " (the cartoons); "Why Ellen Laughed," "Why the Rest of Us Laugh."
Handout. Laughing.

Solms and Turnbull, Brain and Inner World, <self-stimulation> pp. 120-122. 3 pp.

Panksepp, Affective Neuroscience, pp. 144-186. Handout, 43 pp.

Panksepp and Burgdorf, "Laughing' Rats." Handout, 26 pp.

Read ahead!!