

Hannah Klassek

Emmaus Equipping – Assignment 10, Who Controls the Meaning?

Assignment 10-1

Explain the difference between reader response and authorial intent.

Reader response – what we think of it once reading

Authorial intent – why the author wrote it and what it all means and stems from

Reader response to a text is what the reader thinks once having read it, it includes their initial reaction, how they interpreted the text, what they are taking away from the text.

While the authorial intent is why the author wrote it in the first place, it's what the text was originally designed to mean.

Both have meaning, both can be correct, both can be completely different from each other, or the exact same.

Assignment 10-2

Why is the issue of communication important to the discussion of authorial intent?

Communication in a text is where the author has written with the intention of it being read by the reader, and they are able to communicate a message through the text.

We pay closer attention to the meaning of a text when we think the text is for the purpose of communicating with us.

If we didn't know the author, or the text wasn't meant for us, we as the reader have a different response to the text and ultimately can be less affected or shaped by what was written.

This discussion is important because when we read a text, we first need to determine whether the text was designed for us to read, and if so, was the initial authorial intent to be able to communicate with us? Or, was it written for someone else, but maybe still has meaning for us (like the bible).

Assignment 10-3

Discuss several situations whereby a reader may intentionally change an author's intended meaning.

- Not liking what the author had to say in the text. You could read it, disagree with parts of it, so not fully listen or pay attention to the true meaning. Possibly even just half listen.
- Thinking it was written for just you (as opposed to a broader audience), so you adapt the meaning to be what you want it to be.
- The reader may not understand the context behind when the author wrote it. This could be political context, world events, or even the authors situation when they wrote it. This can especially occur when the text was written a long time before the reader reads it.

- The reader may not understand the format of the text. It could be a poem or an essay, or a letter. Unless the reader pays attention to the type of text, they can misjudge what the intention of the meaning could be.