

4A—Re-theorizing the Library #2

Productive Interpretations: Encouraging Patron Agency through Cultural Criticism

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This paper builds on work by scholars such as Janice Radway, Benedict Anderson, Wayne Wiegand, and Henry A. Giroux to show how librarians can productively turn to cultural criticism to better comprehend how patrons exert agency within democratic societies. The paper will suggest modes of engagement with faculty, students, and outreach that encourage investigations of agency, power, and subject positions, through encouraging patrons' processes of producing identities and subject positions. This encouragement of accounting for patrons' productive interpretive processes allows LIS to recognize a fuller range of the types of agency we support, as well as assist patrons in furthering their critical engagement with relations of power within and beyond library doors.