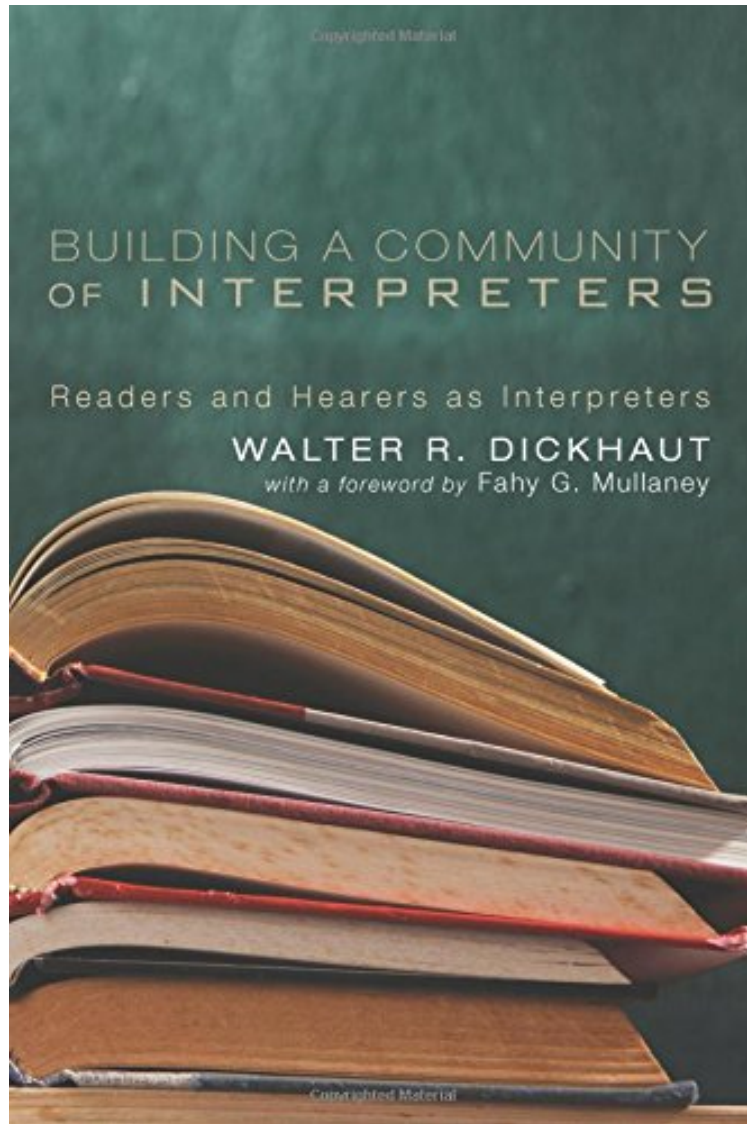


# Building a Community of Interpreters: Readers and Hearers as Interpreters

Walter R. Dickhaut

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**Walter R. Dickhaut : Building a Community of Interpreters: Readers and Hearers as Interpreters** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Building a Community of Interpreters: Readers and Hearers as Interpreters:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A Nice BookBy Pen EnthusiastBuilding a Community of Interpreters is an easy and short read. The author does a good job of explaining concepts that he wants to encourage,

such as surprise and expectation. I appreciated that he added some of his own work into the book, thereby giving examples of the aforementioned concepts. This is a nice book on interpreting and preaching. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. For the Progressive Homiletician By Tommy Used for a textbook in a doctoral class, this book is a relevant guide for any preacher preparing to accept a call to lead a congregation in a postmodern world. 2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Interpretation Is a Many Splendored Thing By Rollin H. Tarter When are two opinions better than one? When you are studying the Bible or listening to a sermon. That's what Walter Dickhaut's book, *Building A Community of Interpreters: Readers and Hearers as Interpreters*, strongly affirms. Not only that, Dickhaut's philosophy is, "the more the merrier", or if not merrier, at least richer and more likely to elicit a sense of wonder, of mystery, of surprise, and of expectation. And those by-products can feed the engine that shapes a bunch of opinions into a community of interpreters. Sounds like a more fun place to be, than what you ordinarily think of as "church", doesn't it? That's exactly what this book holds out to its readers - it offers an invitation to allow all readers' and hearers' imaginations to be free to share the wonder of life together, as it unfolds out of their experience of study and worship. If you don't believe it, try on a few of these exclamations from *Building a Community of Interpreters*: ". . . in the world of a thoughtful mind, where reflection awaits the ways of a nameless Mystery, it is salutary to arrive before the prelude, before the beginning, while it is still dark." Or, "And that is why we are here tonight (Christmas Eve) ....to pray that the dark places into which we are taken may become delivery rooms of possibility, where life may rise up again,..." These are examples of what a community of believers can produce, and hear, and share. To assist us in the process, Walter Dickhaut has provided a guide at the close of the book for enabling its readers to become interpreters and agents of the Word found together.

In *Building a Community of Interpreters* Walter Dickhaut argues that the practice of reading (and, by extension, listening) is no less creative than the practice of writing (and speaking); readers and hearers, just as much as writers and speakers, are producers of meaning. Hence, the work of biblical interpretation is the work--the calling--of a community. Focused on the experience of the reader (or hearer) of biblical texts, he explores such questions as: What happens when the author disappears? What happens when a reader opens a book to meet the author? What happens when a book is read? What happens when the reader changes spectacles? Into discussion of such issues as the reader's angle of vision, when texts open and close, the reader's expectations, the reader's meeting up with the text, and the functions of filters and lenses in the practice of reading and hearing, the author introduces mystery, surprise, and expectation as hermeneutical lenses that can enlarge what may be seen in biblical texts. In addition to some homiletical samples, the author concludes with a suggested teaching plan for building a community of interpreters.

This [book] reads beautifully, is chock-full of lovely reflections and insightful asides, and has all the marks of a great preacher. Whoever heard these sermons should thank their lucky stars. I think this text is exactly the sort of intelligent spiritual reflection the best presses are looking for: warm but not soppy, reflective but not intellectualistic.--John D. Caputo, Syracuse University In this much-needed volume, Walter Dickhaut recovers biblical interpretation for preaching not simply as a community practice, but also as a community event. When it comes to listening to and reading the Bible, we are in this together, and Dickhaut makes the act of interpretation one filled with expectation, suspense, surprise, and new insight.--Thomas G. Long, Candler School of Theology, Emory University We have had more than enough of loud, shrill Bible interpretation, the proponents of which know what they will find before they look. Then along comes Dickhaut with his readerly patience, his waiting imagination, and his artistic capacity. . . . Readers who follow Dickhaut will be led to new ways of reading and a new sense of how the Bible is indeed disclosure beyond the already known.--Walter Brueggemann, Columbia Theological Seminary This insightful offering of poetic prose calls those who preach, read, and hear sacred texts to engage them in a bond of mutuality, both for the text and each other. Walter Dickhaut invites speaker and listener into shared discourse, while affirming what is said and heard combine to shape insights. . . . Readers of this well-crafted book will be led to imagine the impact it might have on congregations and classrooms willing to plumb its depth.--C. Joseph Sprague, Retired Bishop, United Methodist Church --Wipf and Stock Publishers About the Author Walter R. Dickhaut is retired Fogg Professor of Sacred Rhetoric and Oratory at Bangor Theological Seminary in Bangor, Maine. While there he taught preaching and worship in the MDiv curriculum as well as calling and vocation in the DMin program. He now lives with his spouse, Marilyn, in London, Ohio.