

Follow-up report

Discussion evening "Longdrinks" on 17 February 2022 at 6 p.m.

Topic: "Book Consumption and Reception Today - Where and How Are Books Bought? From whom do you get the next hot book recommendation?"

On 17 February we held our "Longdrinks" digital discussion evening on "Book Consumption and Reception Today - Where and How Are Books Bought? From whom do you get the next hot book recommendation?"

The discussion started with the sub-topic "Book consumption today" and then moved on to our second exciting topic, "Book reception today". Based on the impulses given by the discussion leaders, an interesting exchange of ideas about the current book trade and its new players in social media arose - such as BookTuber, Bookstagramer and BookToker. The demographically mixed plenum also talked about the situation of the stationary book trade with regard to the increasingly dominant online trade. We noted that local retailers appear attractive to customers primarily because of the personal touch, which scores particular points with expert on-site advice and the opportunity to browse around. Meanwhile, online retail giants are balancing out the advisory function of retailers with clever algorithms that make the next recommendation to the customer based on previously made purchases. In addition, online retailers are becoming increasingly popular due to the convenience aspect and fast delivery.

Particularly stimulating was the idea of how a new form of literary criticism is forming by means of social networks, first and foremost YouTube, Instagram and TikTok. Primarily young people give their followers their opinion on a book that may go viral, which then finds more and more readers. In this way, the fast-moving videos and clips recommend books that are chosen as the flop or the hype of the month. If one is aware that on such platforms literary criticism is more an expression of a thoroughly subjective opinion and rarely comes close to a "classic" literary criticism, then one can only welcome the promotion of the book and reading in social media. Because this new kind of literary community encourages people to read more - and you really can't complain about that.

In conclusion, it can be said that contemporary book consumption as well as the current book reception are in the midst of change, and along with this, the book as a medium naturally finds a - in the broadest sense - new mediation. Many thanks to all guests for this wonderful evening!