

## **Reading as Social Agency: Sharing Readerly Experiences on the Blogosphere**

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Although often understood as a solitary act, reading seldom is practised in isolation. Book clubs are a manifestation of the social character of reading, as they gather people together to discuss literature. The internet with its plethora of blogs focused on books and reading – be they ‘book blogs’, ‘reader blogs’, or ‘literary blogs’ – takes the social aspects of reading to a next level by multiplying the (potential) amount of members of discussion and transgressing physical boundaries, enabling virtual and transnational reader communities.

The rise of social media has witnessed the emergence of book blogs, where reader/bloggers share their experiences of reading and their interpretations of books. The followers of the blogs may, in addition to reading the blog posts, often also become involved in discussing the books in question. Participation is rewarding, as the readers are allowed to share their thoughts and feelings and exchange opinions about the meanings of books and reading.

Based on reading a selection of book blogs and their comment sections, I suggest that reading is a clearly social act. Not only reading, but sharing the experiences of reading online makes book blogs an interesting field to analyse the varied, more or less affective responses to literature and the several functions of reading in the digital era. Approaching reading, reception, and meaning-making negotiations online, emphasising the individual experiences and the social negotiations around them, demonstrates that there is a variety of ways to position oneself in the digital readerly communities.

In the light of this, it is perhaps worth asking, who is “the common European reader”, or even, is there one? Using intersectionality as my methodological tool, I suggest that reading as an act takes different forms and may have several functions depending on the context. Thus, it is important to pay attention to the differences of the readers and the variation of their gender, age, education, geographical location, sexual orientation, and social class, just to name a few.