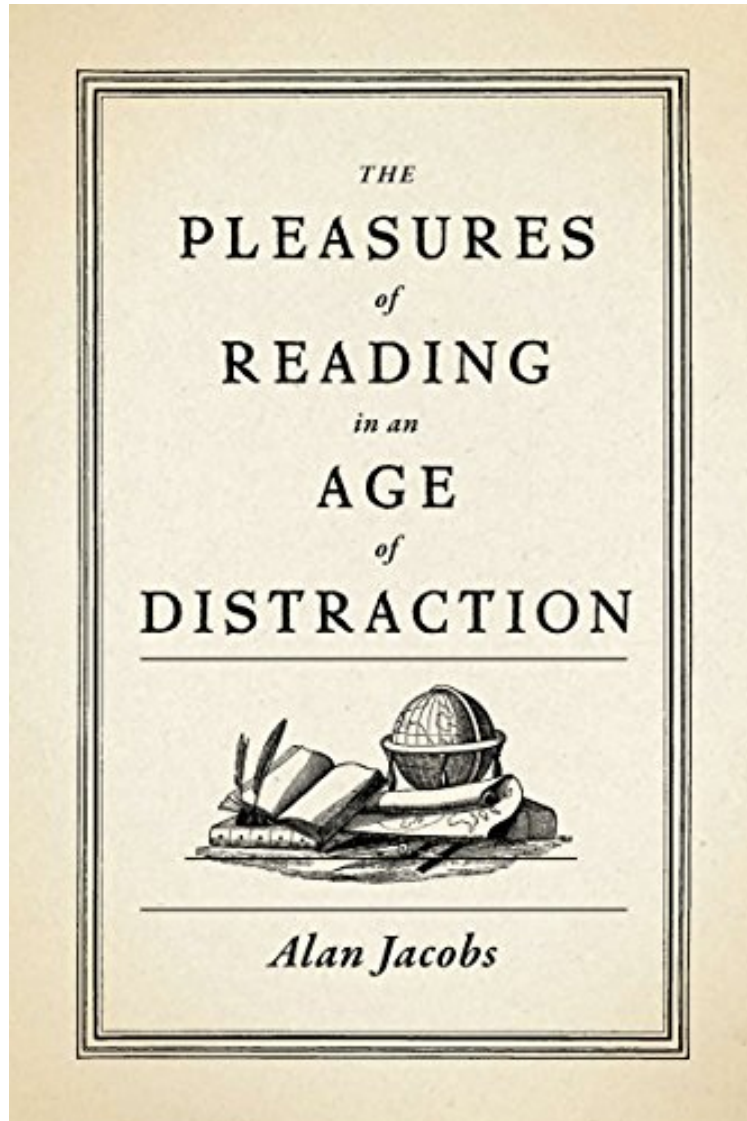


# The Pleasures of Reading in an Age of Distraction

Von Alan Jacobs

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**Von Alan Jacobs : The Pleasures of Reading in an Age of Distraction** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Pleasures of Reading in an Age of Distraction:

KundenrezensionenHilfreichste Kundenrezensionen1 von 1 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Wie wir uns die Fhigkeit des vertieften, genussvollen Langzeit-Lesens wieder aneignenVon HannielDer US-amerikanische Professor fr englische Literatur, Alan Jacobs hat dieses Buch im Stile von Plaudereien in meinem Studierzimmer (oder sage ich besser auf meinem Blog) gehalten. Er spaziert mit Freude und Humor durch seine eigene Biografie als Leser.

Nicht dass er eine chronologische Analyse vornimmt, bewahre. Gerade diese analytische Art ist ihm sehr zuwider. Er will den Anspruch an das Lesen entkrampfen. Nichts ist ihm ein grösserer Greuel (so scheint es zumindest), als ein verbissenes Sich-durch-eine-Leseliste-der-100-wichtigsten-Bücher-Kämpfen. Man tritt dann nämlich mit dem Anspruch an, durch das Lesen gebildet, also im Effekt ein besserer Mensch zu werden. Dieser Anspruch ist utopisch und verkehrt. Jacobs Hauptthese lautet: Lese als oder mit WHIM. Damit ist eine freudiger, in die Welt eines Buches eintauchender, reflektierend antwortender Zugang zum Lesen gemeint. Ironischerweise gewann der Autor diesen Zugang durch sein elektronisches Lesegerät zurück. Er liess sich nicht mehr durch ständig eingehende Nachrichten (200 RSS-Feeds!) stressen, sondern widmete sich wieder ungestört dem Genuss des sich-ungestört-durch-einen-Text-pflegen. Tatsächlich wird Jacobs etwas kulturkritisch trotz allem Dagegenstemmen. Er bemängelt die verlorene gegangene Fähigkeit des anhaltenden, vertieften Langzeit-Lesens. Er propagiert Lesen für jedermann, gibt jedoch im Verlauf seiner Betrachtung unumwunden zu, dass es höchstens einige Prozent der Bevölkerung betreffen würde. Wir sollten also aufhören, uns von Experten vorschreiben zu lassen, was wir in welcher Geschwindigkeit mit welchem Ertrag lesen sollten. Das Lesen sollte von der akademischen Welt abgekoppelt und in die Welt des Alltags zurück verpflanzt werden. Lies, was dir gefällt, und das überwiegend und ohne Scham (15+23). Lies, was das Zeug hält. Lies fürs Leben. Lies, was du lesen willst, in deiner eigenen Geschwindigkeit. Daneben flechtet Jacobs ein, welche erstaunliche Hirnleistung das Lesen darstellt. Ich nehme drei Hinweise aus dem Buch mit: Lesen heisst antworten. Das bedeutet nicht in jedem Fall mit Stift und Tagebuch zu lesen, sondern auch mal ohne Werkzeug, den Text auf sich wirkend und sich hinterfragen lassend. Zweitens komme ich mehr auf den Geschmack, Bücher zum wiederholten Male zur Hand zu nehmen, für einzelne Passagen und insgesamt. Erst so, meint Jacobs, entsteht erst eine richtige Lesegewohnheit. Auch der Rückblick tut gut. Man wächst über die Jahre: Im Rückblick wird man feststellen, dass das, was damals so aufregend neu, über die Jahre integriert worden ist. Die wichtigste Mahnung bleibt jedoch, Bücher nicht um der Seitenzahlen, dem guten Ruf oder der eigenen Bildung willen zu lesen sondern zur Strkung der eigenen inneren Landschaft. Fazit: Das waren vergleichbare fünf, sechs Stunden mit dem Lesegerät.

**Kurzbeschreibung** In recent years, cultural commentators have sounded the alarm about the dire state of reading in America. Americans are not reading enough, they say, or reading the right books, in the right way. In this book, Alan Jacobs argues that, contrary to the doomsayers, reading is alive and well in America. There are millions of devoted readers supporting hundreds of enormous bookstores and online booksellers. Oprah's Book Club is hugely influential, and a recent NEA survey reveals an actual uptick in the reading of literary fiction. Jacobs's interactions with his students and the readers of his own books, however, suggest that many readers lack confidence; they wonder whether they are reading well, with proper focus and attentiveness, with due discretion and discernment. Many have absorbed the puritanical message that reading is, first and foremost, good for you--the intellectual equivalent of eating your Brussels sprouts. For such people, indeed for all readers, Jacobs offers some simple, powerful, and much needed advice: read at whim, read what gives you delight, and do so without shame, whether it be Stephen King or the King James Version of the Bible. In contrast to the more methodical approach of Mortimer Adler's classic *How to Read a Book* (1940), Jacobs offers an insightful, accessible, and playfully irreverent guide for aspiring readers. Each chapter focuses on one aspect of approaching literary fiction, poetry, or nonfiction, and the book explores everything from the invention of silent reading, reading responsively, rereading, and reading on electronic devices. Invitingly written, with equal measures of wit and erudition, *The Pleasures of Reading in an Age of Distraction* will appeal to all readers, whether they be novices looking for direction or old hands seeking to recapture the pleasures of reading they first experienced as children. *Pressestimmen* "As so many recent studies have suggested, the activity of reading itself is seriously threatened in this digital age. But Alan Jacobs -- bless him -- has an approach that will warm the hearts of serious readers and lead many prospective readers into the deeply satisfying swells of good prose. Reading should be a pleasure, and Jacobs shows us how to make sure we take delight in this work, which is not work at all. This is a witty and reader-friendly book, and it's one I would happily give to any potential reader, young or old." -- Jay Parini, author of *The Passages of H.M. and The Last Station* "A vigorous and friendly exhortation to get back into the kind of reading that made you a reader in the first place." -- *Library Journal* "A passionate call to indulge one's readerly passions in the pursuit of centeredness and growth, this book just might change the way you think about reading." -- Brendan Driscoll, *Booklist* "Jacobs gives us the best entry to date in the flu" "Delightful...appealing and convincing." -- *The Wall Street Journal* "As so many recent studies have suggested, the activity of reading itself is seriously threatened in this digital age. But Alan Jacobs -- bless him -- has an approach that will warm the hearts of serious readers and lead many prospective readers into the deeply satisfying swells of good prose. Reading should be a pleasure, and Jacobs shows us how to make sure we take delight in this work, which is not work at all. This is a witty and reader-friendly book, and it's one I would happily give to any potential reader, young or old." -- Jay Parini, author of *The Passages of H.M. and The Last Station* "A vigorous and friendly exhortation to get back into the kind of reading that made you a reader in the first place." - *Library Journal* "Jacobs' little, witty ode to pleasure found between hardcovers is a useful reminder of the

joy of text." --Dan Kois, NPR "Jacobs gives us the best entry to date in the flurry of recent attempts to augur and meditate upon the fate of reading in our time." --John Wilson, Christianity Today "It seems a rare accomplishment that a book on the pleasures of reading could actually pull off being pleasurable itself. But Alan Jacobs' newest book, *The Pleasures of Reading in an Age of Distraction*, does just that. It is a marvelous manifesto of sanity in an age of jeremiads about the modern predicament of attention loss on one hand, and those proud champions of distraction singing the hallelujah chorus of a world devoid of long-form books on the other." --Trevor Logan, *First Things* "A passionate call to indulge one's readerly passions in the pursuit of centeredness and growth, this book just might change the way you think about reading." --Brendan Driscoll, *Booklist* "Alan Jacobs' bright, broad paean to reading is a sort of secular prayer book. It instructs, exhorts, laments, reveres; it has great faith and best of all shows the Way. Or a way at least for author Jacobs, a college English professor, warns well that the road to reading Nirvana is a highly personal one." --Joseph Mackin, *New York Journal of Books* "wonderful" --Micah Mattix, *The Weekly Standard* "Reading Jacobs is a supreme pleasure... Jacobs has reshaped not only how I think about reading but how and what I actually read." --Lauren Winner, *Books Culture* "Jacobs makes a persuasive case that reading for pleasure should remain a live option in any discipline... The book as a whole makes many compelling points and refreshingly celebrates the God-given gift of reading in an age where texts are ubiquitous but often neglected." --Themelios "Using Auden's terms to describe judging books, I conclude that 'I can see this is good and I like it.' *The Pleasures of Reading in a Time of Distraction* represents a realistic approach to recovering deep reading for the sole purpose of pleasure." --*Journal of Education and Christian Belief* "Delightful... appealing and convincing." --*The Wall Street Journal* "As so many recent studies have suggested, the activity of reading itself is seriously threatened in this digital age. But Alan Jacobs -- bless him -- has an approach that will warm the hearts of serious readers and lead many prospective readers into the deeply satisfying swells of good prose. Reading should be a pleasure, and Jacobs shows us how to make sure we take delight in this work, which is not work at all. 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