



Slow Reading in a Hurried Age

By David Mikics

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Slow Reading in a Hurried Age By David Mikics

Wrapped in the glow of the computer or phone screen, we cruise websites; we skim and skip. We glance for a brief moment at whatever catches our eye and then move on. *Slow Reading in a Hurried Age* reminds us of another mode of reading--the kind that requires our full attention and that has as its goal not the mere gathering of information but the deeper understanding that only good books can offer.

Slow Reading in a Hurried Age is a practical guide for anyone who yearns for a more meaningful and satisfying reading experience, and who wants to sharpen reading skills and improve concentration. David Mikics, a noted literary scholar, demonstrates exactly how the tried-and-true methods of slow reading can provide a more immersive, fulfilling experience. He begins with fourteen preliminary rules for slow reading and shows us how to apply them. The rules are followed by excursions into key genres, including short stories, novels, poems, plays, and essays.

Reading, Mikics says, should not be drudgery, and not mere escape either, but a way to live life at a higher pitch. A good book is a pathway to finding ourselves, by getting lost in the words and works of others.

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Editorial Review

From [Booklist](#)

Starred Review Mikics here updates Charles Lamb's nineteenth-century protest against magazine-mongers pushing readers to "pant and toil . . . at a sickening rate" as they frantically cull facts from the latest publications and bid "farewell to reading for its own sake." Like Lamb, Mikics understands how modern culture discourages reading for pleasure—especially in an Internet world of short-lived but insistent information. Inviting readers into a less frenetic, more rewarding world, Mikics explores a series of literary masterpieces, showing how getting lost in a book is still the best way to find joys we really want. These joys, readers quickly realize, come more abundantly to those who follow the 14 rules Mikics expounds—rules fostering patience in dealing with novels' tangled plots, canniness in interrogating dialogues in plays, perceptiveness in discerning poets' styles and themes, acumen in identifying constituent elements of short stories, and imagination in conceiving alternative constructions of those same elements. Readers acquire stimulating perspectives on individual works by Homer and Whitman, Dickens and Cather, Shakespeare and Chekov. But they also develop the intellectual poise to set one work into play with others, across boundaries of nationality, style, and history. An exceptional book whetting readers' appetites for the savoring of many more. --Bryce Christensen

Review

Like [Charles] Lamb, **Mikics** understands how modern culture discourages reading for pleasure--especially in an Internet world of short-lived but insistent information. Inviting readers into a less frenetic, more rewarding world, Mikics explores a series of literary masterpieces, showing how getting lost in a book is still the best way to find joys we really want...Readers acquire stimulating perspectives on individual works by Homer and Whitman, Dickens and Cather, Shakespeare and Chekov. But they also develop the intellectual poise to set one work into play with others, across boundaries of nationality, style, and history. An exceptional book whetting readers' appetites for the savoring of many more.

(Bryce Christensen *Booklist (starred review)* 2013-09-15)

Mikics writes accessibly and with infectious enthusiasm on an impressively eclectic range of classic and contemporary texts. The reader who picks up this volume will likely already have been won over to Mikics's argument, but the book's pedagogical value for students is considerable.

(*Publishers Weekly* 2013-08-05)

There is nothing else like *Slow Reading in a Hurried Age*. **Mikics**'s fourteen rules are quite wonderful, and I will in teaching adopt them myself. (Harold Bloom)

There is much solid wisdom and penetrating advice in these pages. **David Mikics** is an inspired teacher, and he has brought his rich pedagogic imagination to life in this book, which teaches us to fall in love again with great literature. The examples are wonderfully apt and wide-ranging. (Phillip Lopate, Hofstra University)

It may seem counterintuitive to read a book on slow reading in order to help you read more efficiently. But that's exactly what you stand to gain by (slowly) reading...**Mikics**' wise, common-sense guide to getting the most out of real reading--totally immersive reading...I can't recommend this book highly enough.
(*West Australian* 2013-10-08)

Mikics insists that we are not in a world of declining reading, but quite the opposite. People are inundated with words that they feel compelled to read--in email, in tweets, in posts to social networking sites, in text

messages--so much so that they can barely keep up. So we read fast and carelessly and we prize brevity at the expense of substance, a habit that is making all of us increasingly unable to concentrate on what is directly in front of us, constantly distracted as we are by pop-ups, embedded links, and the whole range of digital items that make constant demands on our time and attention...The choice of materials is eclectic but one of the finest achievements of the volume is how compellingly, but undogmatically, it makes the case for a literary canon, one not born of professorial or other fiat but of merit...The greatest strength of the volume is that in modeling slow reading of exemplary works of literature, it fosters exactly the qualities that such reading requires: sustained attention, attentiveness to detail, a willingness and ability to accommodate a gradually building realization of the significance of a given work.

(James Williams *PopMatters* 2013-10-07)

A step-by-step guide to reading books amid the rushing world of an information-obsessed era. The book guides the reader through what amounts to a sort of extended independent study with a very approachable and patient professor. (Ian Stansel *Ploughshares online* 2013-10-28)

This addition to the growing store of literary how-to books opens with the stuff of countless essays and op-ed pieces: too much information, not enough concentration, it is time to slow down. All this functions as a preamble to advice about what to do after the smartphone is turned off: read more patiently and thereby rescue interior depth from the decentering storm of digital text. So although it serves as an introduction to practical criticism, it is also a work of moral improvement, primarily aimed not at students, the captive goal-oriented audience with teachers to please, but at adults with demanding, other-directed lives that hem in the room for contemplation. **David Mikics'** relaxed point that we like to identify with characters in novels puts it plainly: reading is done self to self. (Owen Richardson *Sydney Morning Herald* 2013-11-30)

The problem [**Mikics**] addresses is very real, the rules he proposes make sense, and he is a perceptive reader...Expect a run on this book; it should prove popular in English classes at all levels, from high school and up. (David Keymer *Library Journal (starred review)* 2013-12-15)

Beautifully and unabashedly edifying...**Mikics** is up to something more than just technical instruction. What separates *Slow Reading in a Hurried Age* from other popular or academic how-to guides is Mikics's urgent reverence for literature, which he wants to impress upon the reader. To read well, he clearly believes, is not just to master a skill; it is to become a certain kind of person...Mikics, in calm, authoritative prose, lays out the case that the way we read now is in many cases the enemy of reading as it is supposed to be...*Slow Reading in a Hurried Age* is a guide to becoming a great reader. This is a very hard thing to teach: so much of what happens when we read is internal and instinctive, and it is hard to transform reactions into rules. But Mikics manages to do exactly that... The gift of Mikics's book at the right moment could lead to a lifetime of good, slow reading. (Adam Kirsch *Barnes & Noble Review* 2013-12-10)

[**Mikics**] prizes the kind of 'slow reading' that allows us to appreciate the rhythms and voices and atmosphere of a book, to take it apart as one might a clock, in order to figure out how it works. (Joanna Scott *The Nation* 2015-07-30)

About the Author

David Mikics is John and Rebecca Moores Professor of English at the University of Houston.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Donald Taylor:

In this 21st millennium, people become competitive in every way. By being competitive currently, people have to do something to make these survive, being in the middle of the particular crowded place and notice through surrounding. One thing that sometimes many people have underestimated the item for a while is reading. Yep, by reading a guide your ability to survive enhance then having chance to endure than other is high. For you personally who want to start reading any book, we give you this specific Slow Reading in a Hurried Age book as beginner and daily reading publication. Why, because this book is more than just a book.

Travis Wysocki:

Why? Because this Slow Reading in a Hurried Age is an ordinary book that the inside of the publication waiting for you to snap that but latter it will zap you with the secret the item inside. Reading this book close to it was fantastic author who also write the book in such amazing way makes the content interior easier to understand, entertaining approach but still convey the meaning completely. So, it is good for you because of not hesitating having this anymore or you going to regret it. This book will give you a lot of rewards than the other book have got such as help improving your expertise and your critical thinking way. So, still want to postpone having that book? If I had been you I will go to the publication store hurriedly.

Cecil Atkins:

This Slow Reading in a Hurried Age is great book for you because the content that is certainly full of information for you who have always deal with world and get to make decision every minute. This particular book reveal it facts accurately using great plain word or we can declare no rambling sentences inside. So if you are read the item hurriedly you can have whole info in it. Doesn't mean it only gives you straight forward sentences but tricky core information with splendid delivering sentences. Having Slow Reading in a Hurried Age in your hand like getting the world in your arm, facts in it is not ridiculous a single. We can say that no book that offer you world throughout ten or fifteen moment right but this book already do that. So, this can be good reading book. Heya Mr. and Mrs. stressful do you still doubt that will?

Anthony Balentine:

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