

THE BOOK CLUB

Making space for important conversations through literature.

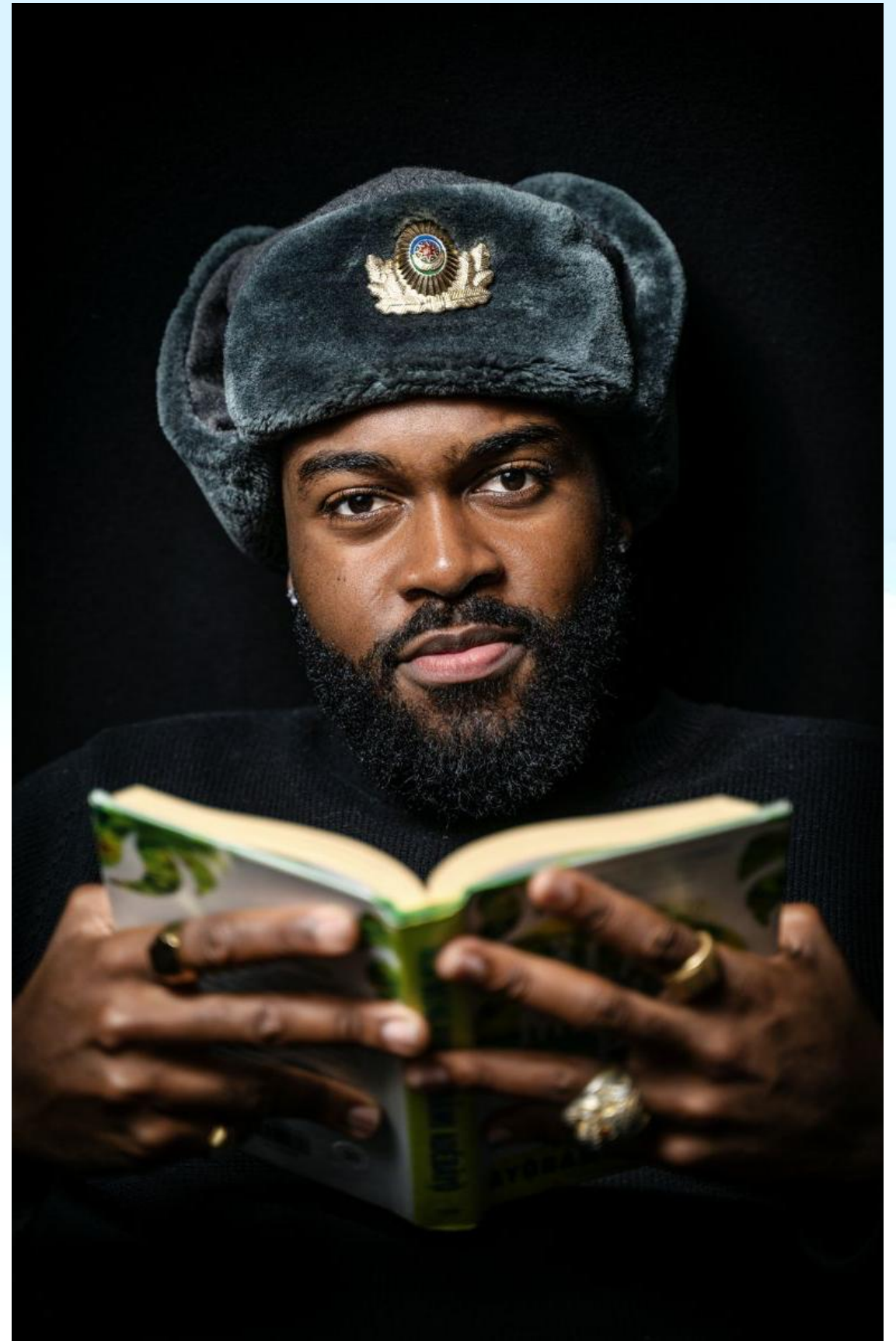
Kriticos

Public Speaker

Marketing Grad

Founder of The Book Club

The
Book Club



Marketing at Daily Paper (clothing brand)



Speech at Federal Parliament of Belgium



The Book Club



Public Speech at European Parliament





THE BOOK CLUB

The Book Club gathers readers and non-readers to discuss books like no other book club.

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WHAT IS A BOOK CLUB?

WHAT IS A BOOK CLUB?

Book Club

Noun /'bʊk klʌb/

1. A group of people who meet to talk about the books that they are reading.

MERRIAM-WEBSTER'S DEFINITION OF A BOOK CLUB.*

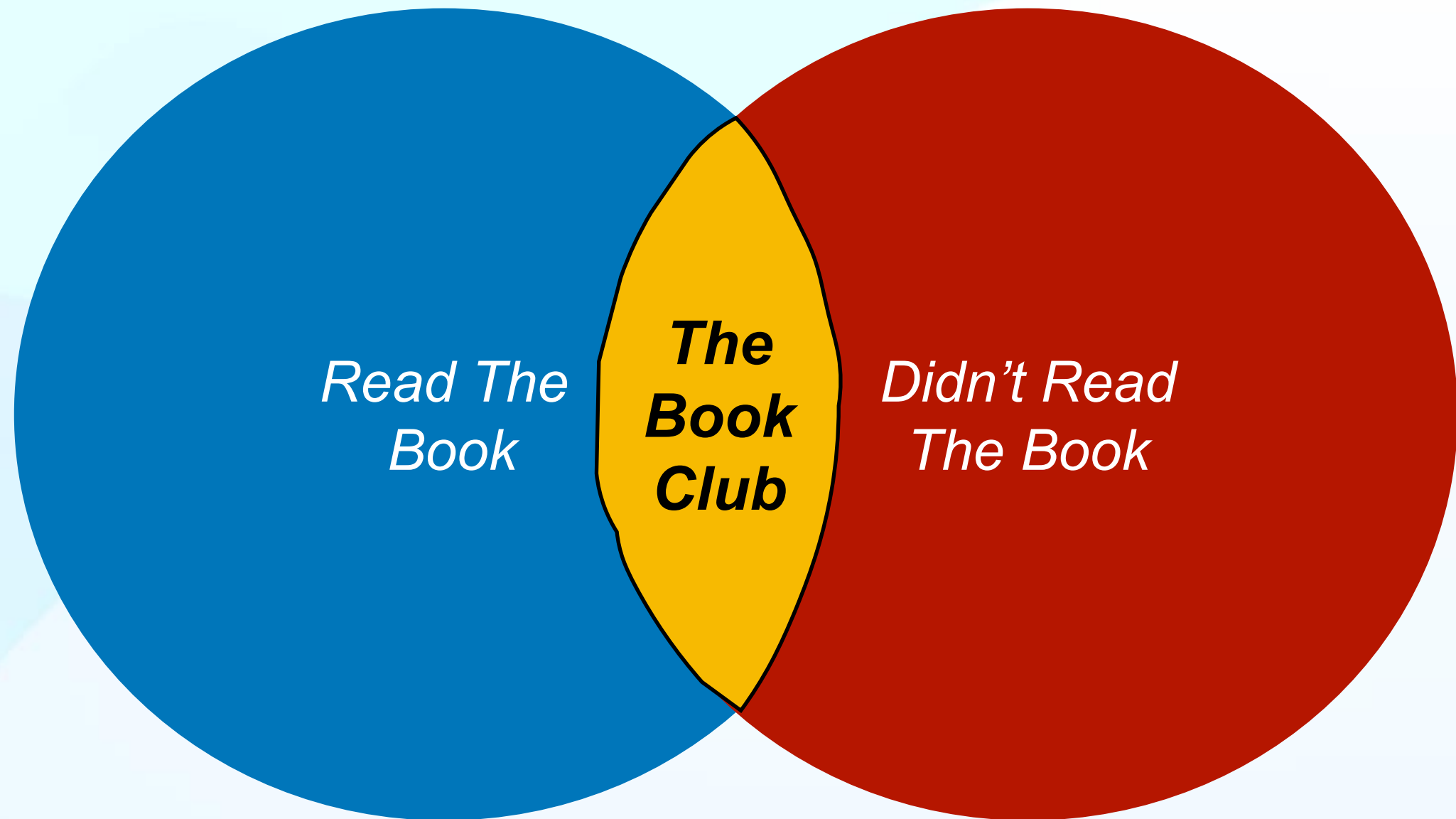
TRADITIONAL BOOK CLUBS

1. Everyone has to have read the book.
2. It's only a select group that gathers until the one book is done.
3. Remain on topic, and not veer into other subjects that aren't related to the book.



THE BOOK CLUB

YOU DON'T HAVE TO READ THE BOOK!



***The Book Club squeezed itself into the market, by making book clubs accessible to all.
Even if you haven't read the book, you can still join in the conversation.***

“THE BOOK CLUB” BREAKS THE RULES.

1. Nobody has to have read the book.
2. We focus on topics, using multiple books, and its on a session to session basis. No commitment needed.
3. Steering off topic and speaking on different subjects is very welcome!



BOOK CLUB WITHOUT READING THE BOOK.

The Book Club gathers people that read the book and the people that didn't read the book.

It does this by placing quotes from the book on a card that is distributed to each member of the roundtable.

The quote is accompanied by a question that opens the conversation to a larger discussion, expanding the subject that has been touched upon by the author.



THE BOOK CLUB CARDS

- The Book Club Card contains 2 things:
- A quote from the book that touches upon a certain topic worth discussing.
- A question to spark debate or introspection.

Much of the anger boys express is itself a response to the demand that they not show any other emotions.

Anger feels better than numbness because it often leads to more instrumental action.

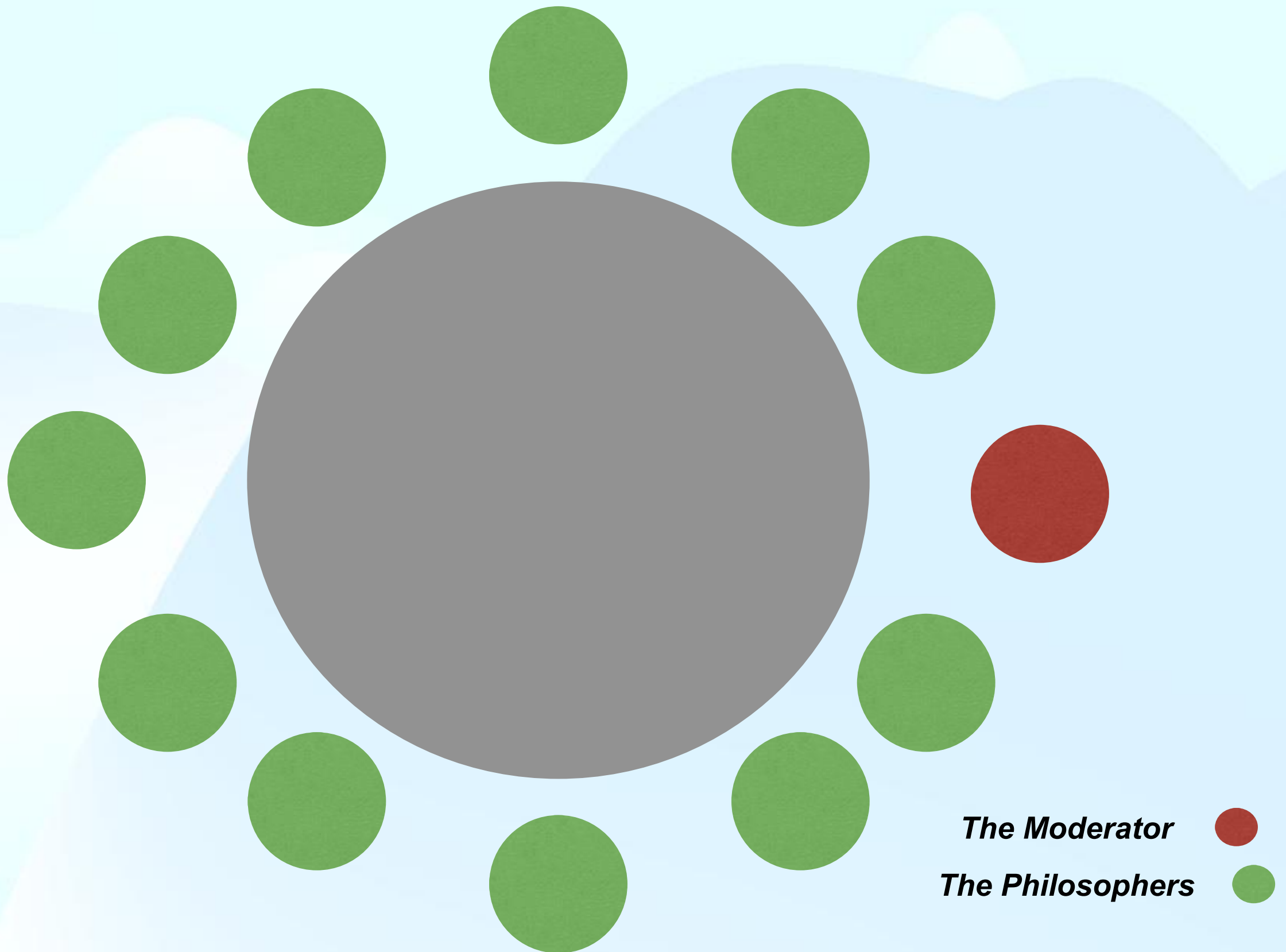
Anger can be, and usually is, the hiding place for fear and pain.

What ways do you think are best to channel your pent up emotions?

**The
Book Club**

*The Will To Change
By bell hooks*

THE BOOK CLUB FORMAT



CONVERSATIONS ABOUT ...

The Book Club has innovated the concept of the traditional book club, by starting “Conversations about ...” This concept allows for quotes from different books to be combined and focus on one particular topic of conversation.

(The photo on the right is from “Conversations about Masculinity” in Amsterdam, where the concept of Masculinity was discussed in depth.)



THE MAGIC OF THE BOOK CLUB

The Book Club becomes a safe space,
inviting people of all ages and
backgrounds to voice their thoughts,
opinions and experiences in relation to
the quotes.

Majority of the time, the people want to
read the book, after the session.



THE MAGIC OF THE BOOK CLUB

The Book Club allowed me to meet one of my closest friends. Thanks to the book club, I got to meet new people in a refreshing way, where we don't have the social anxiety that comes with cocktails, or parties.

- Ikram, 23 from Morocco (in Amsterdam)



My mom used to read books for me and my siblings, so this session brought me back to that time. I didn't know I'd have this similar experience with strangers.

- Doreen, 56 years old from Tanzania (Visiting Brussels)



The session on friendship, made me realise that I've been traumatised by my past friendships and seeing how the quotes and questions triggered me, it made me realise I need to go to therapy. So I signed up to therapy the following week.

- Fred, 31 years old from Congo (In Brussels)



When I first heard that Kriticos' Book Club on masculinity would take place in Finland, I immediately saw two vivid mental images; one where a group of men were sitting quietly in a room staring at the floor, counting the minutes, and an alternative version, where we ran out of wine before The Book Club had even started.

However, to my own surprise, I couldn't have been more wrong!

After the first question "What ways are the best to channel your pent-up emotions?" all the men participating started to discuss. Different perspectives and personal experiences were shared and listened to, resulting in all the unknown men sitting beside me starting to feel less foreign.

- Yohannes, 32 years old from Finland (in Helsinki)

The background of the slide features a stylized landscape. The upper portion is a solid light blue, representing the sky. Below the sky are several layers of rolling hills or mountains. These layers are rendered in a soft, painterly style with colors ranging from pale yellow and cream to light green and mint. The colors transition smoothly, creating a sense of depth and a calm, natural atmosphere.

MARKETING IS IMPORTANT

KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE



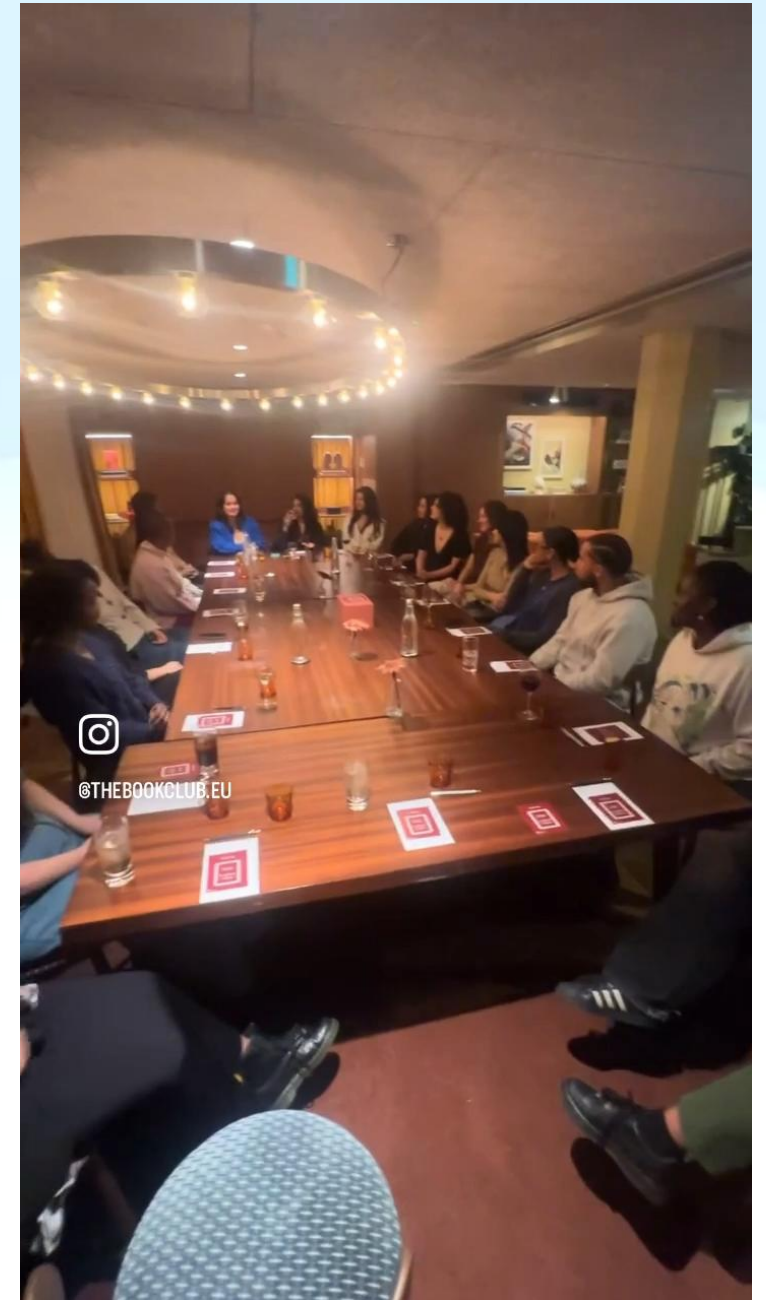
Finland Book Club

1. Coffee
2. Speak a bit of Finnish
3. Invite Finnish figures



For the Youth

1. Keep up with trends.
2. Get the attention quick!
3. Make something funny or memorable



General

1. Capture footage of the sessions
2. Make it look magical
3. Less is more

THE FLUIDITY OF THE BOOK CLUB

The Book Club for Nike EHQ



The Book Club Brunch - The Hoxton Berlin



The Book Club x Untitled Run Club



The Book Club in Prison



The Book Club in High school



The Book Club for Netflix



The Book Club x Stewww



The Book Club x Bia Football Club



The Book Club x Jabat ja Tunteet



THE BOOK CLUB IN PRISON

The Book Club sessions in prison happen every end of year.

It gathers approx. 12 inmates to a series of 4 roundtable discussions to discuss topics such as love, masculinity, health and more.

The sessions in prison lead to incredible breakthroughs from the inmates, interconnection among the inmates as well as an opportunity for the inmates to voice their opinions and ideas like respectable citizens —

a luxury they rarely can afford.



*The Book Club in Prison
(Leuven)*

THE BOOK CLUB ON FOOTBALL

The Book Club sessions during the EURO CUP 2024 was a good way to engage people in a topic that is relevant.

We engaged in conversation on the culture of football, the roles football clubs/players have on their local societies and more.

Following the session, we all watched a football game together, resulting in a sense of communion.



*The Book Club x Bia Football Club
(Amsterdam)*

THE BOOK CLUB X RUN CLUB

The Book Club teamed up with Untitled Run Club in Amsterdam, with the goal of getting the book club active and moving.

We ran 5km then gathered at The Hoxton hotel for breakfast, and following the wind down, we discussed “What I Talk About, When I Talk About Running” by Murakami, where we talked about the importance of running and different ways that health and running have affected our lives.

It felt like a family reunion and it proved that community building through conversation is great, but when you add a challenging activity to it, it makes the bond stronger!



*The Book Club x Untitled Run Club
(Amsterdam)*

THE BOOK CLUB IN HIGH SCHOOL

The Book Club sessions in high schools were very successful.

The schools wanted to engage their students in reading, in a fresh new way.

The teacher would ask “who wants to read the book now?”

100% of the students would be keen to get into the book after the session.

Importance of the sessions is the students got to speak freely on important topics, which is uncommon in the school system.



*The Book Club in High School on
“My Sister The serial Killer”
(Brussels)*

THE BOOK CLUB XL

SCALING IT - THE BOOK CLUB XL



The Book Club reimagines the traditional panel talk, inviting special guests to have a conversation at the table, while people spectate and join in the conversation, throughout the event.

CONFRONTING DIFFICULT CONVERSATIONS THROUGH THE BOOK CLUB XL



This Book Club XL in Brussels was in partnership with the city of Brussels, we had a conversation about Racism, as we approached the elections. The Mayor of Brussels was present and shared their thoughts on how to make Brussels more welcoming to all.

Speakers: Marie Dasylva, Autrice — Comment Survivre Au Taf, Sung shim — Asian Journalist,

Tarik — Educator, Ms. Dorrie Wilson — Academic PhD in Race Sociology,

SCALING IT - THE BOOK CLUB XL



*The Book Club XL x The City of Brussels
(Brussels, Belgium)*



*The Book Club XL x Are We Allowed to Just Dream
(Amsterdam)*



*The Book Club XL x Kiasma Museum
(Helsinki, Finland)*



*The Book Club XL x Puma
(Paris, France)*

SCALING IT - THE BOOK CLUB XL



The Book Club reimagines the traditional panel talk, inviting special guests to have a conversation at the table, while people spectate and join in the conversation, throughout the event.

By placing the table in the middle of the room,
we create a sense of community, rather than a “Stage vs. Audience” feeling.
This makes everyone feel included in the conversation, rather than feel like they are
watching experts, they feel like their voice also matters.

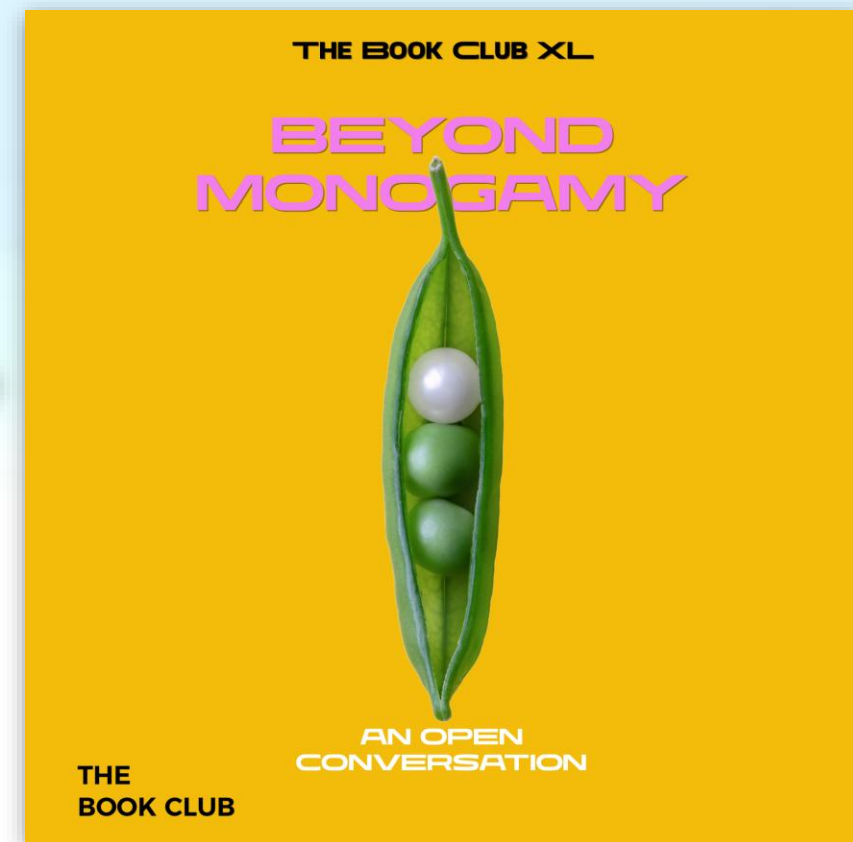
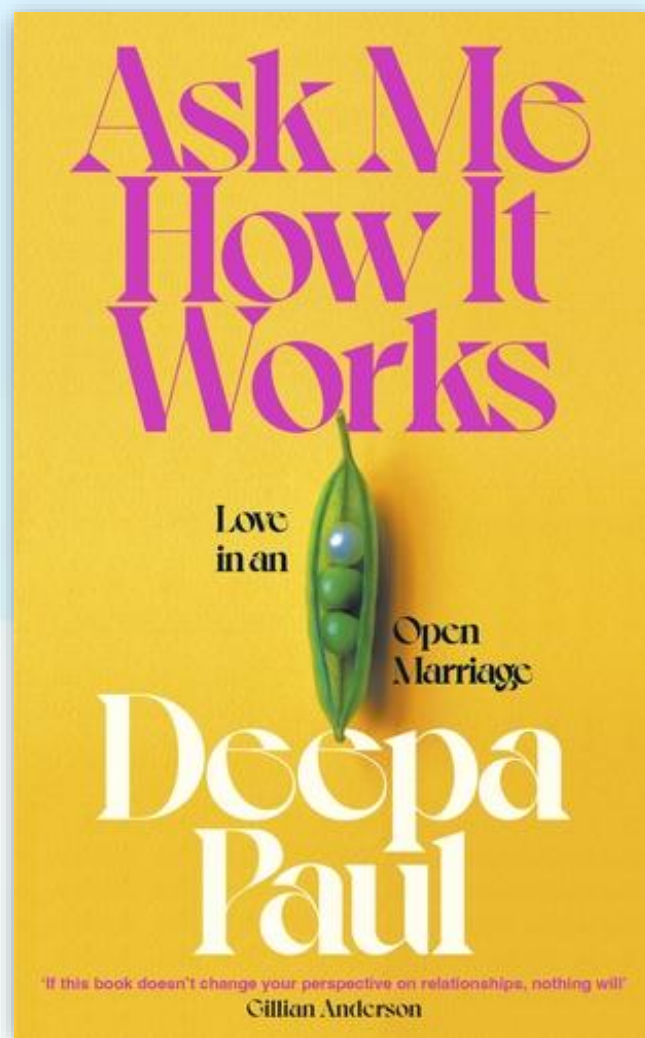


TACKLING DIFFICULT TOPICS



The Book Club XL brings 'experts' or authors to the table to discuss topics that are sometimes seldom discussed. This allows the spectators to watch, learn and also chime into a conversation they might not have discussed or feel implicated in.

FROM BOOK TO CONVERSATION



By naming the event as a topic of discussion rather than the title of the book, we help spark curiosity and open the conversation to a wider audience (especially an audience that may not read).

HAVE BOOKS READY FOR CURIOUS MINDS



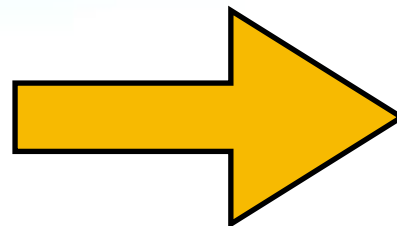
At the end of the event, the author had a book sale and book signing.

That night she sold 80% of her stock.

By focusing on the conversation first, people became curious to learn more, from the book.

THE BOOK EXCHANGE

THE BOOK EXCHANGE



THE BOOK EXCHANGE



The Book Exchange (Amsterdam)

THE RULES:

- BRING A BOOK.
- TALK ABOUT HOW YOU CONNECTED WITH THAT BOOK.
- EXCHANGE IT WITH SOMEONE.

BENEFITS:

- OFFERS NEW WAY OF CONNECTING WITH PEOPLE.
- SUSTAINABLE WAY OF GETTING RID OF BOOKS + GETTING NEW BOOKS.
- OFFERS MARKETING OPPORTUNITIES.

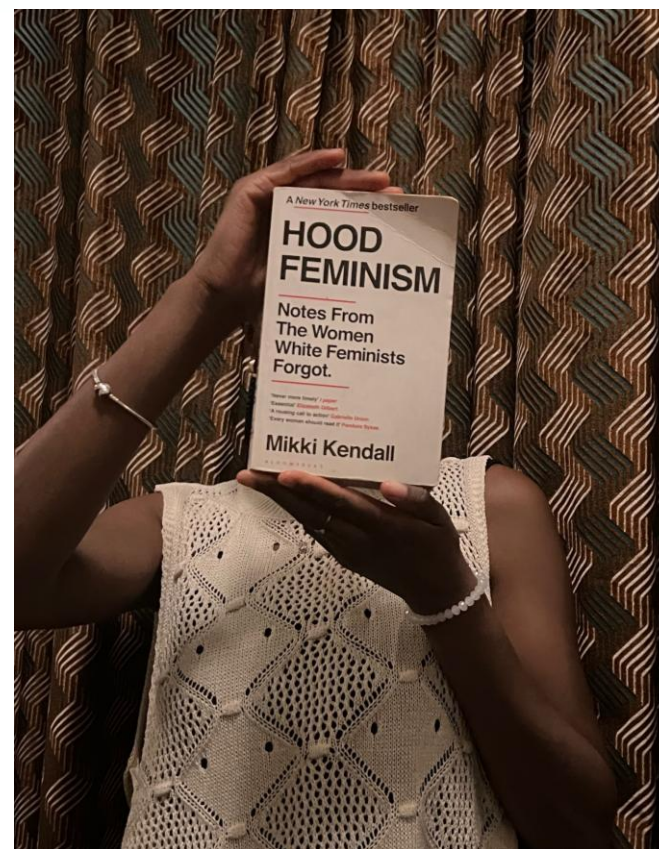
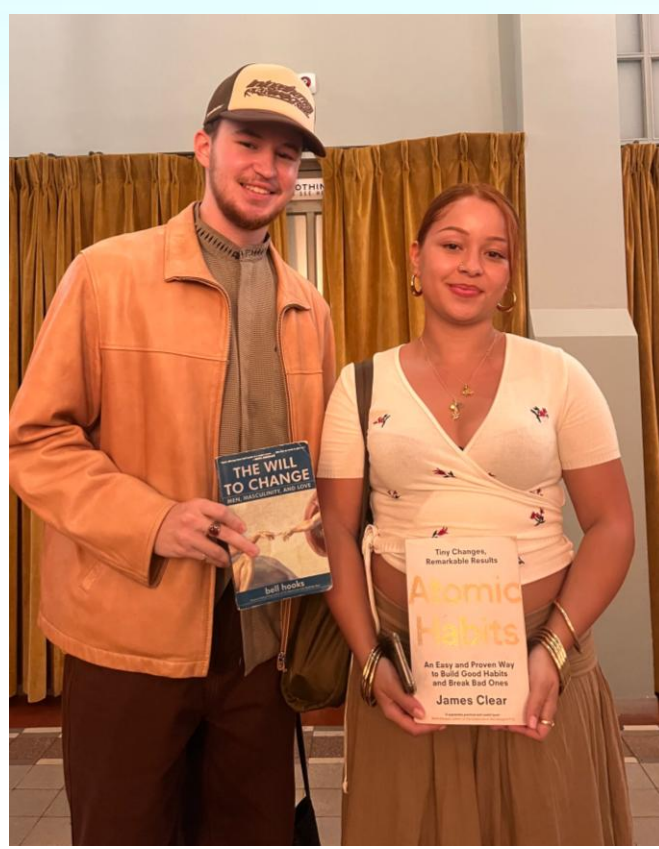
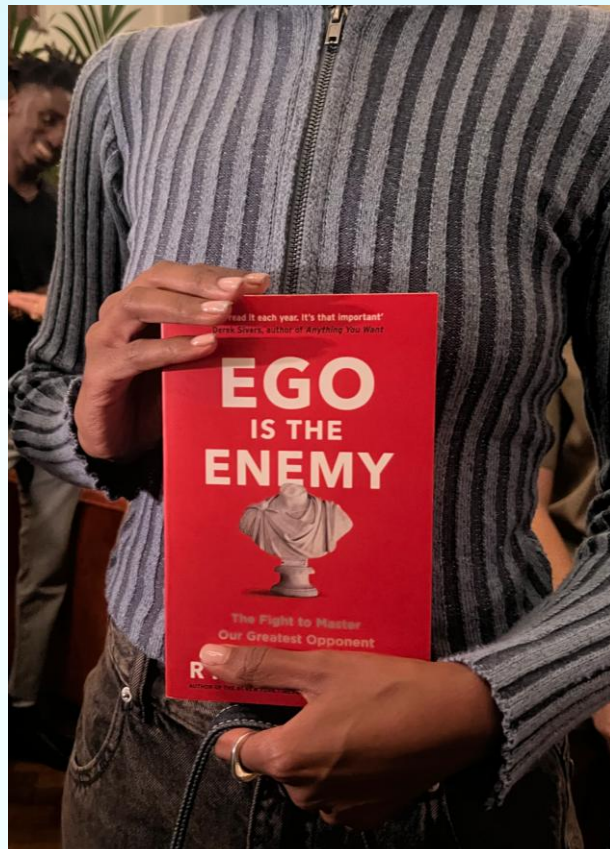


The vibe of the night

THE BOOK EXCHANGE



The books exchanged



The books exchanged

THE IMPORTANCE OF REFRAMING HOW WE CATEGORISE BOOKS

Instead of categorising our books
like: Crime, Fantasy, Romance, etc.
try this:



A Book That Felt
Like a Warm Hug

A Book I Wish More
People Would Read

A Book That Took
Me Back in Time

A Book That Kept
Me Up All Night

A Book That
Healed My Heart

A Book That Made
Me Believe in
Magic

A Book That Felt
Like Poetry

A Book That Made
Me Laugh Out Loud

A Book That
Taught Me About
Life

A Book That Took
Me on a Journey

A Book I Wish I
Could Read Again
for the First Time

A Book That Made
Me Rethink
Everything

PRESS & MEDIA

THE BOOK CLUB CLIENTS



PRESS AND MEDIA

L'Officiel Magazine

L'OFFICIEL

ART & CULTURE

5 livres à rattraper cet été d'après le club de lecture The Book Club

Autour de la piscine, sous un parasol à la plage, sur un banc en ville... Où que vous soyez, les vacances d'été sont le moment idéal pour rattraper votre retard littéraire, après une année surchargée. Pour vous aider dans la préparation de votre valise, voici les 5 lectures estivales recommandées par Kriticos, le fondateur de The Book Club.

27.05.2024 by The Book Club

Elle Magazine NL

ELLE MODE BEAUTY ENTERTAINMENT CARRIÈRE EN GELD HOROSCOOP DECORATION Shop NIEUWSBRIEF

Tijdloos leesvoer – deze klassiekers van boeken moet je volgens een kenner echt een keer gelezen hebben

Boekentips zijn natuurlijk altijd welkom, en bij deze presenteren we je de lijst der lijsten.

DOOR TAVIZA BALRAADISING GEPUBLICEERD OP: 29/03/2024



The Hoxton - The Localist



BRUSSELS

The Book Club With Kriticos

Meet Kriticos Mwansa, Brussels resident and our very own book club curator. Born in Zambia to a Zambian-Greek father and a Tanzanian mother, he spent time living in Amsterdam wo...

SiR Hotels



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> Culture > Lifestyle

A reverse book club in Brussels has guests sharing from the soul



Finnish Cultural Institute

FINNISH INSTITUTE BENELUX News Programme Finnish Courses Institute

Internationally acclaimed The Book Club concept by Kriticos Mwansa arrives in Helsinki

OCT 18, 2022 | 2022, EVENTS, MASCULINITIES



9.11.2022

(The text is in Finnish helms / Suomalaiskielinen teksti on alla)



YOUR TURN!

Break into small groups and discuss a book club card.

HOW IT WORKS:

- 1) *Read the quote*
- 2) *Read the question*
- 3) *Discuss the question.*

All About Love

by bell hooks

Self-love is the foundation of our loving practice.

Without it our other efforts to love fail.

Giving ourselves love we provide our inner being with the opportunity to have the unconditional love we may have always longed to receive from someone else.

Self Love — What does it look like?

THE
BOOK CLUB



EMPOWERMENT THROUGH BOOKS

- CONNECT PEOPLE TO OTHERS
- CONNECT PEOPLE TO INSPIRING FIGURES.
- CONNECT PEOPLE TO ART.
- EDUCATE YOUTH ON BIGGER TOPICS.
- ACTIVISM THROUGH BOOKS



The Book Club at The Van Gogh Museum



MAKING THE 3RD SPACE

THE 3 SPACES:

WHERE WE LIVE, WORK & CONNECT

1st Space

The Home.

“Where we retreat and recharge.”

2nd Space

The Work Place.

“Where we work, learn, and perform.”

3rd Space

The 3rd Space.

Where community, conversation, and democracy thrive.

THE THREE SPACES: WHERE WE LIVE, WORK & CONNECT

1st Space

The Home.

Comfort & Security
Personal Identity
Limited Social Interaction

2nd Space

The
School/Work
Place.

Hierarchy & Rules
Achievement Oriented
Transactional Relationships

3rd Space

The 3rd Space.

Inclusivity & Accessibility
Conversation & Connection
Democracy & Exchange of
ideas

FOSTERING CONNECTIONS IN THE 3RD SPACE.



- Host community-driven events — Open debates, intergenerational meet-ups, and themed book clubs to foster dialogue.
- Design flexible, welcoming spaces — Cozy seating, a mix of quiet and social zones, and a self-service café corner.
- Expand digital & creative access — Offer digital literacy workshops, co-working spaces, and creative labs for collaboration.

The Book Exchange (Amsterdam)



FOR THE LIBRARIES

THE ROLE OF A LIBRARY

"Libraries are one of the few places in society that offer equal access to knowledge.

*Whether you're a student, a job seeker, or a retiree, the library is there for you. I see students using it for research, elderly people reading newspapers, and immigrants attending language courses. **It's not just a building with books, it's a public service that keeps learning alive for all ages.**"*

— Sandra Uwase (45, Teacher - Belgium)

"For many people, especially those who feel isolated, libraries are a space to connect.

*I've seen young people come in just to have a quiet space to study, but then they end up in discussions with others. In my work, I use libraries for workshops and community meetings. **They're a rare space where people can meet without needing to spend money.**"*

— Mohammed Hassan (29, Community Organiser - The Netherlands)

*"Libraries are evolving to meet the needs of modern society. It's not just about books anymore, it's about **access to information**. Whether it's free WiFi, coding workshops, or digital archives, libraries help bridge the digital divide. As someone who grew up using libraries for research, I now see them as **spaces that should empower people to navigate today's information-heavy world.**"*

— Camilla Bianchi (32, Tech Consultant - Belgium)

IMPLEMENTING THE MODEL IN LIBRARIES

- HOSTING 'NO READ BOOK CLUBS' W/ BOOKS ON DISPLAY.
- COLLABS W/ SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITY CENTRES.
- CREATING (MONTHLY) THEMED CONVERSATIONS.

**The
Book Club**



The Book Club at Muntpunt Book Store

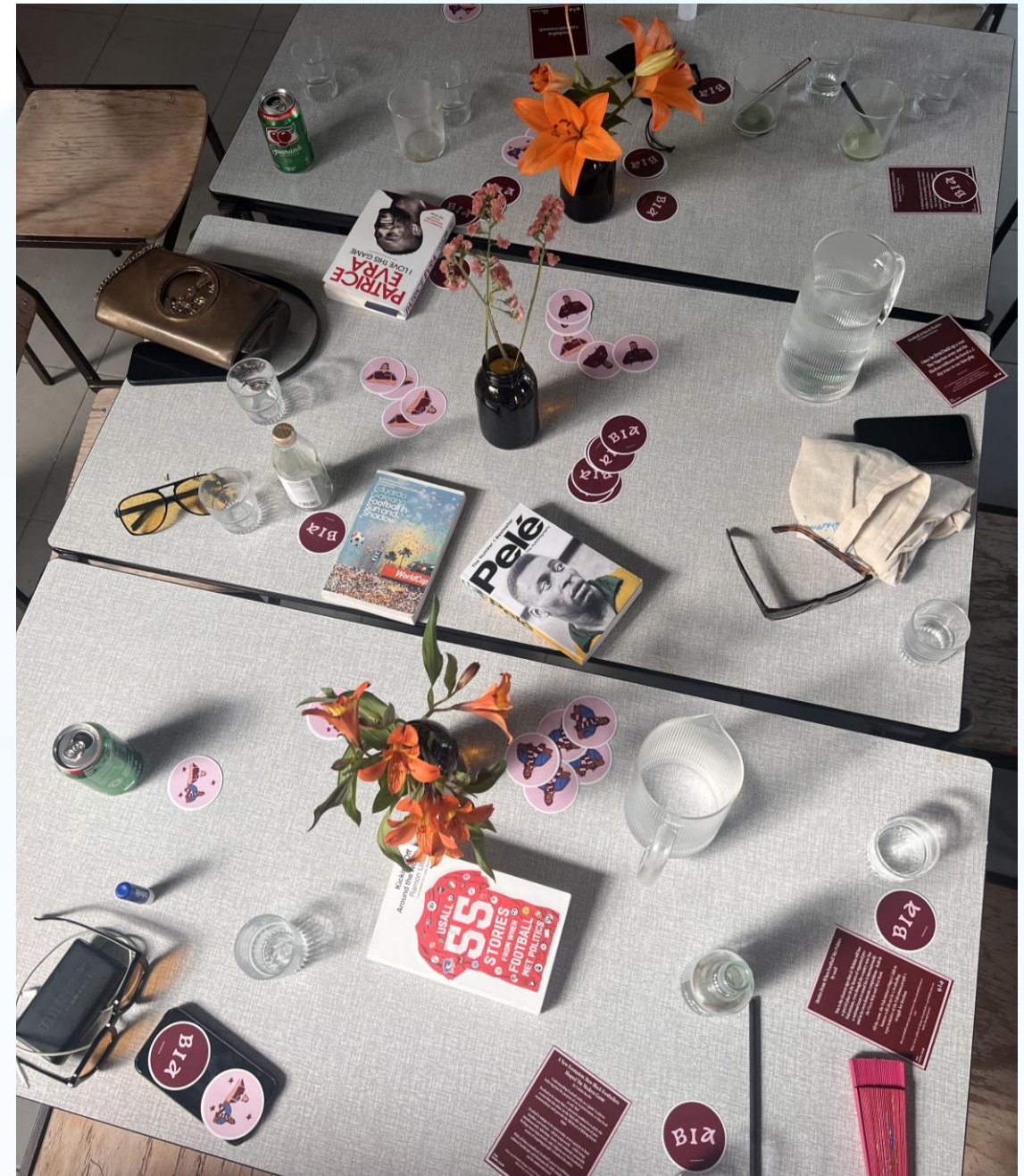
No READ BOOK CLUBS

HOST CONVERSATION SALONS IN A SPACE
IN THE LIBRARY. MAKE IT A WARM
SETTING FOR EXCHANGE.

HAVE THE BOOKS THAT WERE USED ON
STANDBY, FOR PEOPLE TO TAKE HOME.

IDEAS:

1. "READING LIST OF THE MONTH"
2. SEASONAL TOPICS
3. SPECIAL GUESTS



COLLABS W/ SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITY CENTRES.



BRING LOCAL SCHOOLS OR COMMUNITY CENTRES INTO THE LIBRARY AND HOST CONVERSATIONS WITH THEM ON SOME OF THE BOOKS IN YOUR SHELVES.

IDEAS:

1. DONATE A LIST OF BOOKS.
2. HAVE SPECIAL GUESTS COME AND CONNECT WITH THE YOUTH.
3. BOOK EXCHANGE BETWEEN STUDENTS.

The Book Club in High school

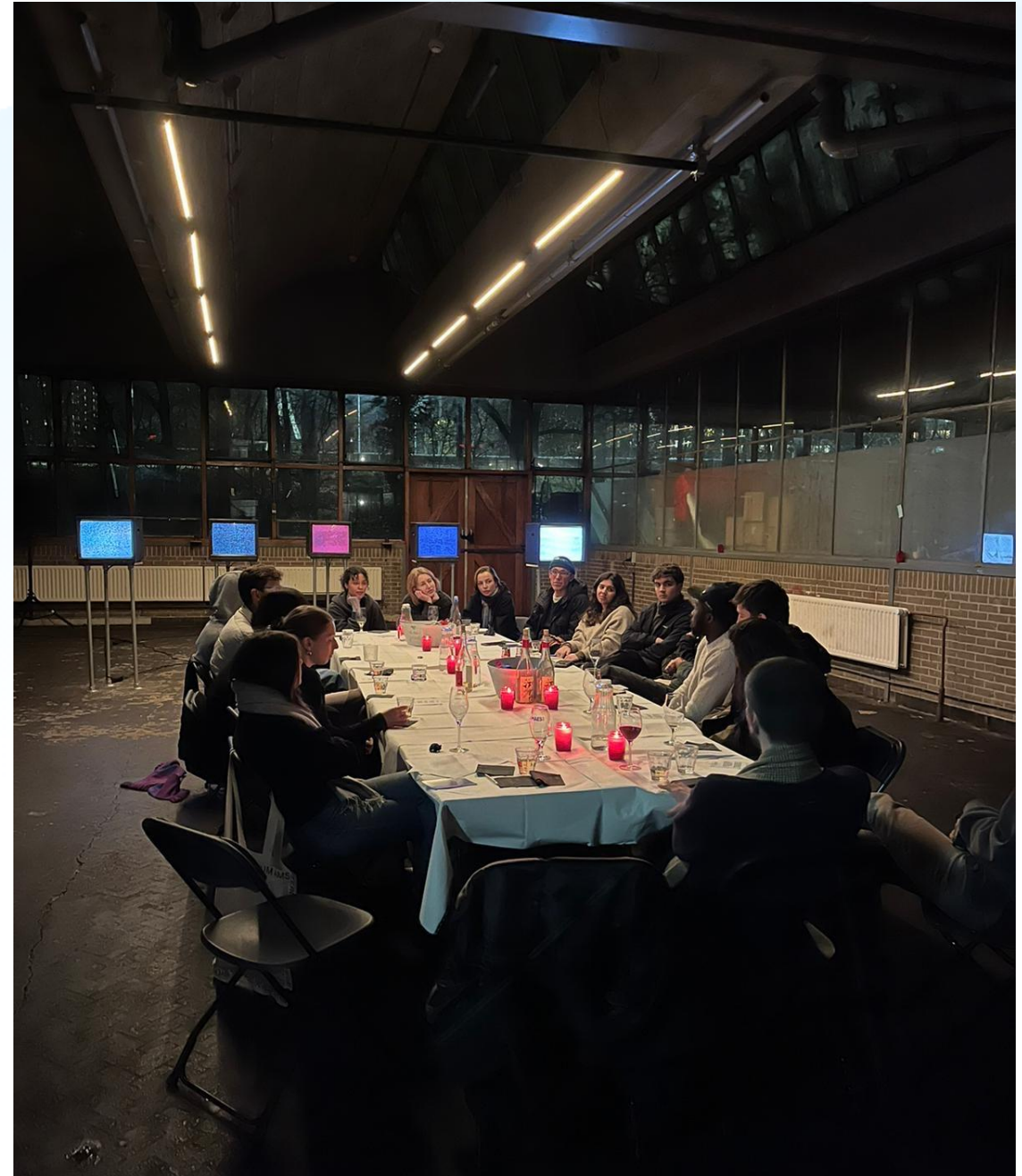
THEMED CONVERSATIONS

BRAINSTORM ON (RELEVANT) THEMES FOR THE LIBRARY'S BOOK CLUB TO DO, IN ORDER HOST THEMED CONVERSATIONS.

HAVE A SECTION IN THE LIBRARY WITH THE BOOKS IN THE THEME. "BOOKS OF THE MONTH" OR "BOOKS OF THE SEASON" ETC.

I.E.: DURING CHRISTMAS SEASON, ORGANISE 3 SESSIONS OF BOOK CLUBS:

1. MAINTAINING CHRISTMAS SPIRIT AS WE GROW OLDER.
2. CAPITALISM DURING THE HOLIDAYS.
3. CHRISTMAS NOSTALGIA (BRING YOUR FRIENDS/FAMILY)



The Book Club in De School (nightclub)

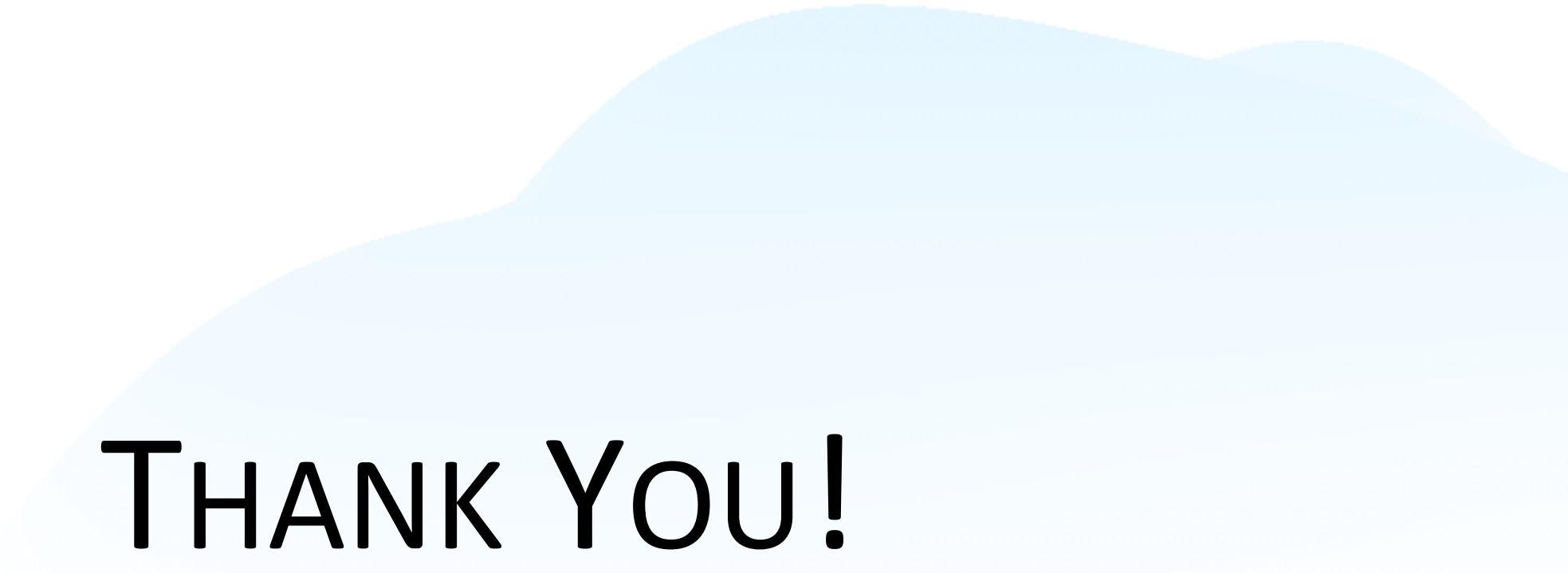
IN CONCLUSION

We are in a constantly changing society, we evolved the way we interact with music (from Analog to Digital), films (from tapes to streaming), it's time we also rethink how we engage with books and literature.

If authors write books to get a message across and spark conversation and thought through storytelling, lets synthesise the messages and get the conversation going among our communities, directly. In that way, we bring the authors words to life.

Furthermore, Libraries are not just about books. They are bridges, connecting people to knowledge, to each other, and to their own stories. If we truly embrace the Third Space model, libraries can be the most powerful democratic spaces of our time.

A space where ideas are exchanged, difficult conversations happen, and where everyone, regardless of background, feels they belong. By making these conversations more accessible and welcoming to all ages, we can make substantial change for the future and older generations.



THANK YOU!

Any questions?

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