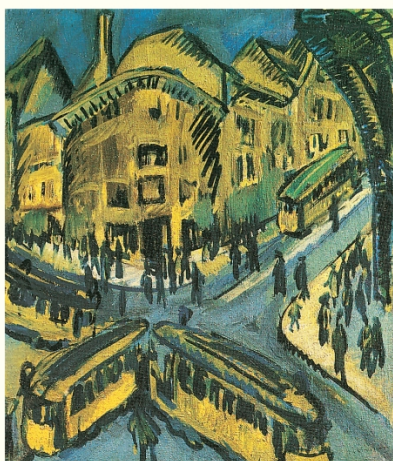


# Diogenes

**Bernhard Schlink**  
***The Reader***

Published by Diogenes as *Der Vorleser*  
Original title: *Der Vorleser*



**Bernhard  
Schlink**  
***Der Vorleser***

*Roman · Diogenes*

On the way home, a fifteen-year-old boy called Michael Berg gets into difficulties. A woman in her mid-thirties helps him out. Some time later, the boy takes her a bunch of flowers as a way of saying thank you. He visits her again. Hanna is the first woman he has ever desired, and a secret love begins. But there is something dark and mysterious about Hanna, and she reacts irritably to his questions about who she is. One day she disappears. She vanishes from Michael's life, but not from his thoughts. As a student of law he encounters Hanna again in court. The young man gets a shock when he realises he has loved a criminal. He can see no rhyme nor reason in the way Hanna behaves during the trial. That is, until the scales fall from his eyes. For Hanna is not only guilty of a cruel crime, she also has a desperately well-protected secret. The past is unveiled – Michael's past love, and the past of Germany. Michael realises that he cannot escape from either of them. A woman who is difficult to understand or accept, either for Michael or the reader. And the dilemma of a generation.

Book factsheet

Contemporary Literature, Compulsory  
Reading, Gift Books  
208 pages  
11.6 x 18.4 cm  
September 1995

World rights are handled by Diogenes

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Thai (Library House)  
Turkish (Iletisim)  
Ukrainian (Folio)  
Uzbek (Faylasuflar)  
Vietnamese (Nha Nam)

**🏆 Bestseller**

# 1 New York Times Bestseller  
Spiegel Bestseller

**🎬 Movie adaptations**

**2011: Das Wochenende**

Director: Nina Grosse  
Cast: Katja Riemann, Sebastian Koch, Barbara Auer

**2009: The Reader**

Director: Stephen Daldry  
Screenplay: David Hare  
Cast: Kate Winslet, Ralph Fiennes, David Kross,  
Bruno Ganz, Karoline Herfurth, Volker Bruch,  
Hannah Herzprung und Alexandra Maria Lara



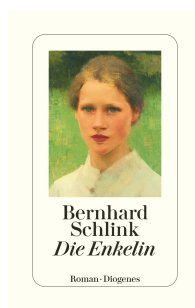
Bernhard Schlink, born in 1944, was a Professor of Public Law and Legal Philosophy and a former judge at the Constitutional Court of North Rhine-Westphalia. His first novel, *Self's Justice*, was published in 1987; his 1995 novel *The Reader*, translated into more than fifty languages and adapted by Stephen Daldry into a film starring Kate Winslet, established his worldwide renown. He has been awarded with national and international prizes like the German ›Bundesverdienstkreuz (Order of Merit) 1st Class‹, the French ›Chevalier dans l'Ordre de la Legion d'Honneur‹ and the Italian ›Grinzane Cavour Prize‹. His latest novel is *The Late Life*.



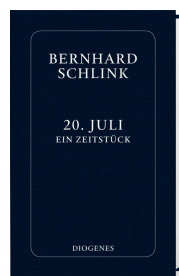
*Justice*  
208 pages  
2026



*The Late Life*  
240 pages  
2024  
🏆 **Bestseller**



*The Granddaughter*  
368 pages  
2021  
🏆 **Award winner**  
🏆 **Bestseller**



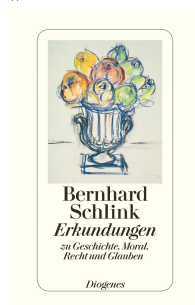
*The 20th of July*  
96 pages  
2021



*Colours of Farewell*  
240 pages  
2020  
🏆 **Bestseller**



*Olga*  
320 pages  
2018  
🏆 **Bestseller**



*Explorations*  
288 pages  
2015



*The Woman on the Stairs*  
256 pages  
2014  
🏆 **Bestseller**

## 🎬 Movie adaptations (cont'd)

### 2008: *The Other Man*

Director: Richard Eyre  
Screenplay: Richard Eyre  
Cast: Liam Neeson, Laura Linney und Antonio Banderas

### 1991: *Der Tod kam als Freund*

Director: Nico Hoffmann  
Cast: Martin Benrath, Hannelore Elsner, Heino Ferch, Marianne Hoppe

## 🏆 Awards

- 2024 Spanische Übersetzung von *Die Enkelin* mit dem ›Premio de las Librerías de Navarra‹ ausgezeichnet
- 2014 ›Pak Kyong-ni Prize‹ der südkoreanischen Kulturstiftung Toji für sein schriftstellerisches Schaffen
- 2003 ›Bundesverdienstkreuz 1. Klasse‹ für *Der Vorleser*
- 2002 ›Preis des German-British Forum‹ für sein Gesamtwerk
- 2001 Finnischer Literaturpreis ›Eeva Joenpelto-Preis‹ der Gemeinde Lohja
- 2001 Ernennung zum ›Chevalier dans l'Ordre de la Légion d'Honneur‹
- 2000 ›Ehrengabe‹ der Heinrich-Heine-Gesellschaft in Düsseldorf
- 2000 ›Sonderkulturpreis‹ der japanischen Tageszeitung *Mainichi Shinbun*, der jedes Jahr an einen japanischen Buchbestseller vergeben wird, für *Der Vorleser*
- 2000 ›Evangelischer Buchpreis‹ des Deutschen Verbandes Evangelischer Büchereien für *Der Vorleser*
- 1999 Erstmals verliehener ›WELT-Literaturpreis‹ für sein literarisches Schaffen
- 1997 ›Grinzane-Cavour-Preis‹ (Italien) für *Der Vorleser*
- 1997 ›Prix Laure Bataillon‹ (Frankreich) für *Der Vorleser* (Auszeichnung für den Autor sowie für den Übersetzer Bernard Lortholary)
- 1997 ›Hans-Fallada-Preis‹ der Stadt Neumünster für *Der Vorleser*
- 1993 ›Deutscher Krimi-Preis‹ des Bochumer Krimi Archivs für *Selbs Betrug*
- 1989 Autorenpreis deutschsprachige Kriminalliteratur ›Der Glauser‹ für *Die gordische Schleife*

## Praise

### *The Reader*

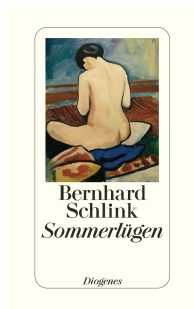
›Schlink writes sparkling novels with political relevance and an awareness of the German past.« – Der Tagesspiegel, Berlin

›A literary event.« – Volker Hage / Der Spiegel, Hamburg

›A formally beautiful, disturbing and finally morally devastating novel. ›The Reader‹ ensnares both heart and mind.« – Los Angeles Times



**Thoughts on Writing**  
96 pages  
2011



**Summer Lies**  
288 pages  
2010  
🏆 **Bestseller**



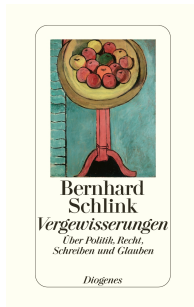
**The Weekend**  
240 pages  
2008  
🎬 **Movie Adaptation**  
🏆 **Bestseller**



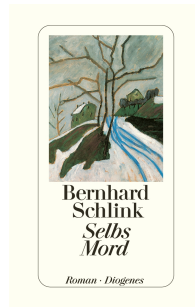
**Guilt of the Past**  
192 pages  
2007



**The Homecoming**  
384 pages  
2006  
🏆 **Bestseller**



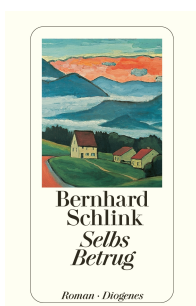
**Verifications**  
368 pages  
2005



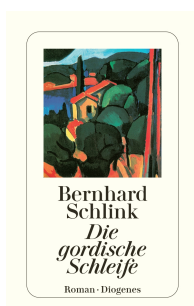
**Self's Murder**  
272 pages  
2001



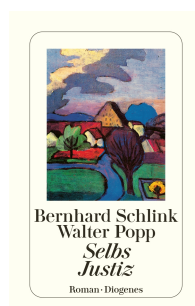
**Flights of Love**  
320 pages  
2000  
🎬 **Movie Adaptation**



**Self's Deception**  
304 pages  
1992  
🏆 **Award winner**



**The Gordian Knot**  
272 pages  
1988  
🏆 **Award winner**



**Self's Punishment**  
352 pages  
1987  
🎬 **Movie Adaptation**

## Praise (cont'd)

»*The Reader* is a very fine novel, as far above a Holocaust genre as ›Crime and Punishment‹ is above the average thriller, a sensitive, daring, deeply moving book about the tragic results of fear and the redemptive power of understanding.« – Ruth Rendell

»For generations to come, people will be reading and marvelling over Bernhard Schlink's *The Reader*.« – Evening Standard, London

»Arresting, philosophically elegant, morally complex. Mr. Schlink tells his story with marvelous directness and simplicity.« – Richard Bernstein / The New York Times

»The book's strength is that it does not evade any of the questions that arise from the clash between the present and the past, between love and contempt, between the desire to understand and the need to condemn.« – Pierre Deshusses / Le Monde, Paris

»A moving, suggestive and ultimately hopeful work.« – Suzanne Ruta / The New York Times Book Review

»The arrival, almost unheralded, of a masterly work. The reviewer's sole function is to say as loudly as he is able ›Read this‹ and ›Read it again‹. ›The Reader‹ is rapidly becoming a touchstone of moral literary throughout Europe.« – George Steiner / The Observer, London

Bernhard Schlink

»Schlink has won his huge popular following by bringing to bear a penetrating intelligence about the psyche of his characters and an empathy for their dilemmas. Professor Schlink may be an expert on the letter of the law, but writer Schlink is an intrepid explorer of the much trickier terrain of the human heart.« – Andrew Nagorski / Newsweek, London

»[Schlink] writes instructive tales that adeptly raise difficult questions and propose appealing answers.« – New York Times Book Review

»The German novelist Bernhard Schlink is pretty much second to none when it comes to storytelling.« – Helmut Atteneder / Oberösterreichische Nachrichten, Linz

»Schlink knows the depths of the human soul all too well. The writer and judge proves with each of his books that he knows how to transform German history into literature.« – ZeitPunkt, Leipzig

»One of the most successful and versatile German writers of our time.« – Volker Hage / Der Spiegel, Hamburg

»The truly masterly aspect of Schlink's prose is its intelligence – an intelligence that is firmly rooted in common sense.« – Welt am Sonntag, Hamburg