



Reading the Booker Prize. The Booker Prize and its Impact on the UK Publishing Industry, with a Focus on Small Independent Publishers

Andrea Lyttle

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Doctoral Thesis / Dissertation from the year 2013 in the subject Communications - Journalism, Journalism Professions, grade: Distinction, Edinburgh Napier University, course: MSc Publishing, language: English, abstract: This dissertation is an investigation into the annual UK Literary Award, the Booker Prize. It examines the effects of this award on the UK publishing industry, and the UK Literary Prize industry, focusing on the effect of the prize on small independent publishers. The report found that the Booker Prize exerts a relatively substantial impact on the UK publishing industry, significantly driving sales of long listed, short listed and winning titles. It was found that the imprimatur of the prize is a powerful marketing tool that gains books and authors an important accredited visibility in an overcrowded marketplace. The influence of the Booker Prize on the UK publishing industry as a whole is however, limited by its exceptionally niche target audience segment which alienates the mid to mass market. The award has, however caused the emergence and re-profiling of prizes and what may be referred to as the 'Bookerisation' of the prize industry; even initiatives such as Richard and Judy book club are indirectly modeled on the Booker Prize. Finally the prize has huge implications for small independent publishers. Though success needs to be carefully managed, any Booker association can accelerate growth, engender vision and direction, and help a company gain a firmer foothold in a difficult industry that is monopolised by conglomerate owned imprints. Booker success can however be a financial strain for an independent publisher with small margins.

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