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## The Richard & Judy Book Club Reader

Popular Texts and the Practices of Reading



Edited by **Jenni Ramone** and **Helen Cousins**, Newman University College, UK

In January 2004, daytime television presenters Richard Madeley and Judy Finnigan launched their book club and sparked debate about the way people in Britain, from the general reader to publishers to the literati, thought about books and reading. *The Richard & Judy Book Club Reader* brings together historians of the book, literature scholars, and specialists in media and

cultural studies to examine the effect of the club on reading practices and the publishing and promotion of books.

Beginning with an analysis of the book club's history and its ongoing development in relation to other reading groups worldwide including Oprah's, the editors consider issues of book marketing and genre. Further chapters explore the effects of the mass-broadcast celebrity book club on society, literature and its marketing, and popular culture. Contributors ask how readers discuss books, judge value and make choices. The collection addresses questions of authorship, authority and canon in texts connected by theme or genre including the postcolonial exotic, disability and representations of the body, food books, and domesticity. In addition, book club author Andrew Smith shares his experiences in a fascinating interview.

**Contents:** Introduction: on readers and reading, *Jenni Ramone* and *Helen Cousins*; PART 1 THE RICHARD & JUDY BOOK CLUB READERS: Suspicious minds: Richard & Judy's Book Club and its resistant readers, *Danielle Fuller* and *DeNel Rehberg Sedo*; Entertainment media, risk and the experience commodity, *Nickianne Moody*; Different spaces, same old stories? On being a reader in the Richard & Judy Book Club, *Alex Kendall* and *Julian McDougall*; Richard and Judy behind bars, *Jenny Hartley*. PART 2 READING THE RICHARD & JUDY BOOK CLUB SELECTIONS: You can't judge a book by its coverage: the body that writes and the television book club, *Kerry Myler*; 'Not the normal kind of chicklit'? Richard & Judy and the feminised middlebrow, *Beth Driscoll*; The roles of the storytellers: Richard and Judy read *The Jane Austen Book Club*, *Jenni Ramone*; A good authentic read: exoticism in the postcolonial novels of the Richard & Judy Book Club, *Helen Cousins*; The delicious side of the story: culinary writing, cultural contexts and the club, *Lorna Piatti-Farnell*. PART 3 AFTER THE RICHARD & JUDY BOOK CLUB: 'What really counts is the story': interview with *Andrew Smith*, author of *Moondust* (February 10, 2010), *Jenni Ramone*; Ten of thousands: the TV book club, *Helen Cousins*; Appendix; Index.

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