E-BOOKS AND 'REAL BOOKS'

On any given day, millions of people will read e-books. Yet many of us will do so while holding them apart from 'real books'. The fact that a book can be worthy – of our time, money, respect, even love – without being 'real' is a fascinating paradox of twenty-first-century reading. Drawing on original data from a longitudinal study, Laura Dietz investigates how movement between conceptions of e-books as *ersatz*, digital proxy, and incomplete books serves readers in unexpected ways. The cultural value of e-books remains an area of intense debate in publishing studies. Exploring the legitimacy of e-books in terms of their 'realness' and 'bookness', Dietz enriches our understanding of what e-books are, while also opening up new ways of thinking about how we imagine, how we use, and what we want from books of every kind. This title is also available as Open Access on Cambridge Core.

LAURA DIETZ is Lecturer in Publishing at University College London. She speaks and publishes widely on reading, authorship, and digital literary culture, serving on related prize, festival, and conference committees, editorial boards, and the Board of Directors of the Society for the History of Authorship, Reading and Publishing.

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'Given the complicated nature of e-books, and the fact that the digital landscape and publishing industry change frequently, this is not a topic that many scholars are brave enough to tackle – but that is also why it is needed. Laura Dietz's rich scholarly engagement and far-reaching data survey make this essential reading for those looking to understand book publishing in the twenty-first century.'

Rachel Noorda, Associate Professor and Director of Book Publishing, Portland State University

'A nuanced survey of readerly perceptions around ebooks, this is a study that respects the complexities of engaging with the material and shows appreciation for the deeply contextual nature of the arguments concerned, dispelling notions of a rigid binary set up by metaphors around "the death of the book" or "book wars". This is an informative and insightful contribution to scholarly field of publishing studies.'

Simon Rowberry, Lecturer in Publishing, University College London

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E-BOOKS AND 'REAL BOOKS'

Digital Reading and the Experience of Bookness

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