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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Digital Reading and the Experience of Bookness

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Shaftesbury Road, Cambridge CB2 8EA, United Kingdom

One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA

477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia

314–321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre, New Delhi – 110025, India

103 Penang Road, #05-06/07, Visioncrest Commercial, Singapore 238467

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www.cambridge.org
Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781009490764

DOI: 10.1017/9781009490795

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When citing this work, please include a reference to the DOI 10.1017/9781009490795

First published 2025

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data
NAMES: Dietz, Laura, author.
TITLE: E-books and 'real books' : digital reading and the experience of bookness / Laura Dietz, University College London.
DESCRIPTION: New York : Cambridge University Press, 2024. | Includes bibliographical references and index.
IDENTIFIERS: LCCN 2024025144 (print) | LCCN 2024025145 (ebook) | ISBN 9781009490764 (hardback) | ISBN 9781009490771 (paperback) | ISBN 9781009490795 (epub)
SUBJECTS: LCSH: Electronic books. | Books and reading–History–21st century. | Reading, Psychology of.
CLASSIFICATION: LCC Z1033.E43 D54 2024 (print) | LCC Z1033.E43 (ebook) | DDC 028–dc23/eng/20240710
LC record available at https://lccn.loc.gov/2024025144
LC ebook record available at https://lccn.loc.gov/2024025145

ISBN 978-1-009-49076-4 Hardback

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