

# Reading Across Worlds: Transnational Book Groups and the Reception of Difference (New Directions in Book History)

James Procter, Bethan Benwell



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Moving between the worlds of professional (academic) and lay readers (book groups), between metropolitan and non-metropolitan audiences, between the imagined worlds of fiction and the real worlds of reading, and between the locations of England, Scotland, Canada, the Caribbean, India and Africa, *Reading Across Worlds* draws otherwise distant readerships into conversation. Combining sustained empirical analysis of reading group conversations with four case studies of classic and contemporary novels: *Things Fall Apart*, *White Teeth*, *Brick Lane* and *Small Island*, the book pursues what can be gained through a comparative approach to reading and readerships.

This is a book about how readers beyond the academy talk about, use and make sense of a literature that publishers and bookstores, the press and professional critics, have variously labelled 'multicultural', 'international', 'diasporic', 'cosmopolitan', 'global', 'postcolonial', 'Third World', or more recently, 'World'.

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