



Rereadings: Seventeen writers revisit books they love

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Is a book the same book-or a reader the same reader-the second time around? The seventeen authors in this witty and poignant collection of essays all agree on the answer: Never.

The editor of *Rereadings* is Anne Fadiman, and readers of her bestselling book *Ex Libris* (FSG, 1998) will find this volume especially satisfying. Her chosen authors include Sven Birkerts, Allegra Goodman, Vivian Gornick, Patricia Hampl, Phillip Lopate, and Luc Sante; the objects of their literary affections range from *Pride and Prejudice* to *Sue Barton*, *Student Nurse*. Each has selected a book or a story or a poem--or even, in one case, the lyrics on the back of the Sgt. Pepper album--that made a deep impression in his or her youth, and reread it to see how it has changed in the interim. (Of course, what has really changed is the reader.)

These essays are not conventional literary criticism; they are about relationships. The relationship between reader and book is a powerful one, and as these writers attest, it evolves over time. *Rereadings* reveals at least as much about the reader as about the book: each is a miniature memoir that focuses on that most interesting of topics, the protean nature of love. And as every bibliophile knows, no love is more life-changing than the love of a book.

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Minerva Gagliano:

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Peter Pitts:

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