



Arts & Humanities  
Research Council



The Open University

## THE READING EXPERIENCE DATABASE (RED) 1450-1945 RE-LAUNCH

Following a successful AHRC funding bid, the Reading Experience Database (RED) is moving into a new phase of development. We aim, over the next three years, to build up a collection of more than **25,000 accounts of reading experience**. By this we mean descriptions of reading by actual readers found in sources such as diaries, journals, memoirs, autobiographies, letters, commonplace books, interviews and so on. By the end of the first year (summer, 2007), RED will be **live** and fully **searchable** on the internet, covering the period **1450- 1945**.

But RED will only ever be as good as the material that goes into it. **And this is where the wider community of readers comes in**. If, in the course of your own reading, you come across a description of reading **from any historical period between 1450 and 1945** (and this can be as cursory as, for example, finding a simple record of an identifiable reader having read a particular book, or as extensive as finding a whole page of comments by an identifiable reader on the practice of reading, or a whole diary which records a person's thoughts on what they read every day), **please** make a note of it, and pass on that information to us: Katie Halsey ([Katie.Halsey@sas.ac.uk](mailto:Katie.Halsey@sas.ac.uk)) or Rosalind Crone ([R.H.Crone@open.ac.uk](mailto:R.H.Crone@open.ac.uk)). **The only thing we do NOT want is FICTIONAL ACCOUNTS OF READING; historical sources only, please!**

Even better, please fill in one of our forms yourself with the information. The forms come in two types: short and long. They are on our website: <http://www.open.ac.uk/Arts/RED/>, and there are guidelines: <http://www.open.ac.uk/Arts/RED/notes.htm> for filling them in. If you would prefer hard copies, please contact Katie or Rosalind (details below).

Anyone interested in working on a particular individual who lived in or visited Britain during the period 1450 -1945 and who left letters, diaries, annotated books, autobiographies etc. which contain references to their reading of English texts should also get in touch with us. RED is looking for volunteers to work their way systematically through such materials in order to record evidence of reading.

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