



### Rethinking Therapeutic Reading

Lessons from Seneca, Montaigne, Wordsworth and George Eliot

*By Kelda Green, Foreword by Michael Wood*

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**A reconsideration of the role that serious literary reading might play in the real world.**

‘A highly valuable, timely and scholarly contribution to the current debate around the therapeutic power of literary reading. The book distinctively recovers a tradition of “bibliotherapy” in Western literature and culture as the basis for an empirically tested blueprint of literature-as-therapy for modern-day readers. Serious writing about serious reading.’ —Josie Billington, Professor, Department of English Literature, University of Liverpool, UK

‘Close reading, as practised in this admirable book, will help us escape from habitual ways of thinking, make us suspicious of easily arrived at certainties and widen our sympathies. Readers, being also citizens, will thus be strengthened in the everyday struggle against fake news and downright lies.’ —David Constantine, Writer and Translator

‘Rethinking Therapeutic Reading’ uses a combination of literary criticism and experimental psychology to examine the ways in which literature can create therapeutic spaces for personal thinking. It reconsiders the role that serious literary reading might play in the real world, reclaiming literature as a vital tool for dealing with human troubles.

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Introduction; Part One: Four Models; I. Senecan Tragedy and Stoic Philosophy; II. Therapy and the Essay: Montaigne, after Seneca; III. Therapy and Poetry: Wordsworth, after Seneca; IV. Therapy and the Novel: George Eliot, after Wordsworth; Part Two: Three Experiments; V. Experiment One: First Impressions; VI. Experiment Two: Slowing Down and Tuning In; VII. Experiment Three: Writing Back; Conclusion; Index.

### About the Author

Kelda Green completed her PhD at the University of Liverpool’s Centre for Research into Reading, Literature and Society in 2018.

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