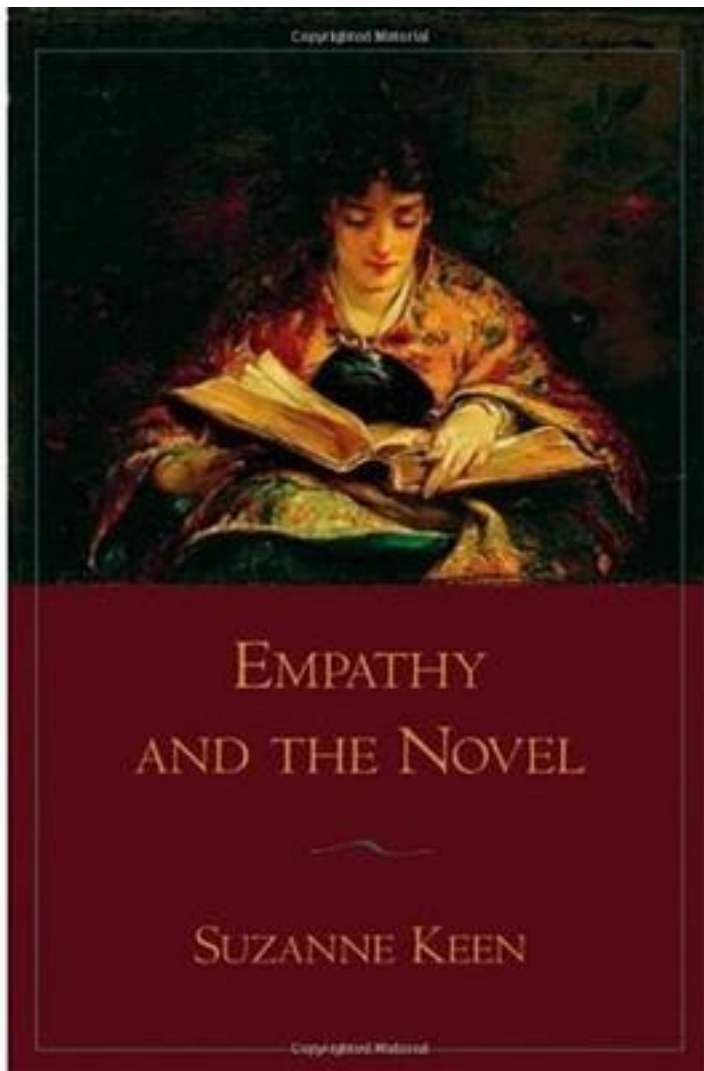


Empathy and the Novel



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出版者:Oxford University Press, USA

出版时间:2007-4-19

装帧:Hardcover

isbn:9780195175769

Does reading novels evoking empathy with fictional characters really cultivate our sympathetic imagination and lead to altruistic actions on behalf of real others? *Empathy and the Novel* presents a comprehensive account of the relationships among novel reading, empathy, and altruism. Though readers' and authors' empathy certainly contribute to the emotional resonance of fiction and its success in the marketplace, Keen finds the case for altruistic consequences of novel reading inconclusive (and exaggerated by defenders of literary reading). She offers instead a detailed theory of narrative empathy, with proposals about its deployment by novelists and its results in readers. *Empathy and the Novel* engages with neuroscience and contemporary psychological research on empathy, bringing affect to the center of cognitive literary studies' scrutiny of narrative fiction. Drawing on narrative theory, literary history, philosophy, and contemporary scholarship in discourse processing, Keen brings together resources and challenges for the literary study of empathy and the psychological study of fiction reading. Empathy robustly enters into affective responses to fiction, but its proper role in shaping the behavior of emotional readers has been debated for three centuries. Keen surveys these debates and offers a series of hypotheses about literary empathy, including narrative techniques inviting empathetic response. She argues that above all readers' perception of a text's fictiveness increases the likelihood of readers' empathy, by releasing readers from their guarded responses to the demands of real others. She confirms the centrality of narrative empathy as a strategy, as well as a subject, of contemporary novelists. Despite the disrepute of putative human universals, novelists from around the world endorse the notion of shared human emotions when they overtly call upon their readers' empathy. Consequently, Keen suggests, if narrative empathy is to be better understood, then women's reading and popular fiction must be accorded the respect of experimental inquiry.

作者介绍:

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标签

文学研究

小说理论

评论

这本书可以起个副标题——当叙事学家遇到神经科学。结果就是两边都不靠。不知道OUP这次怎么想的。。

Intro基本把所有都说尽了，实际的chapters看点很少

只能说作为开山之作有抛砖引玉的功效？后悔没有先看豆瓣评论

序言已经包括了各章节的总结，看看序就行了。文学当中的具体应用可见第二章，至于其他章节，感兴趣看看，嫌麻烦看她另外一篇A Theory of Narrative Empathy，把握个大致意思

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书评

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