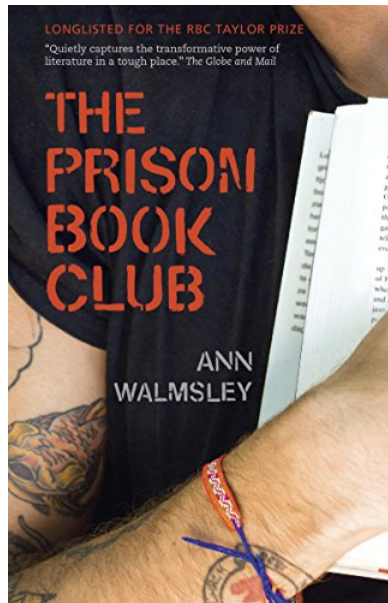


[Free PDF File] The Prison Book Club



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A daring journalist goes behind bars to explore the redemptive power of books with bikers, bank robbers, and gunmen. An attack in London left Ann Walmsley unable to walk alone down the street, and shook her belief in the fundamental goodness of people. A few years later, when a friend asked her to participate in a bold new venture in a men's medium security prison, Ann had to weigh her curiosity and desire to be of service against her anxiety and fear. But she signed on, and for eighteen months went to a remote building at Collins Bay, meeting a group of heavily tattooed book club members without the presence of guards or security cameras. There was no wine and cheese, no plush furnishings. But a book club on the inside proved to be a place to share ideas and regain a sense of humanity. For the men, the books were rare prized possessions, and the meetings were an oasis of safety and a respite from isolation in an otherwise hostile environment. Having been judged themselves, they were quick to make judgments about the books they read. As they discussed the obstacles the characters faced, they revealed glimpses of their own struggles that were devastating and comic. From *The Grapes of Wrath* to *The Cellist of Sarajevo*, *Outliers* to *Infidel*, the book discussions became a springboard for frank conversations about loss, anger, redemption, and loneliness. *The Prison Book Club* follows six of the book club members, who kept journals at Walmsley's request and participated in candid one-on-one conversations. Graham the biker, Frank the gunman, Ben and Dread the drug dealers, and the robber duo Gaston and Peter come to life as the author reconciles her knowledge of their crimes with the individuals themselves, and follows their lives as they leave prison. And woven throughout is the determined and compassionate Carol Finlay, working tirelessly to expand her program across Canada and into the United States. The books changed the men and the men changed Walmsley, allowing her to move beyond her position as a victim. Given the choice, she'd forsake the company of privileged friends and their comfortable book club to make the two-hour drive to Collins Bay.

CONTINUE ►

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