CANADA READS THROUGHOUT THE YEARS

An attempt to form a cross country book club and bring Canadians together to experience and share great Canadian literature.



mass media professionals who make radio programs for Canada's public broadcaster" (Fuller, 2007, p.3)

Many viewers become skeptical of Canada Reads. People begin to question if turning Canadian Literature into a mass media spectacle is appropriate.

Redemption! <

This year Canada Reads decided to bring back the winning panelists from the lst five years. They called this the all-star series. Again, this was brought in to attract a broader audience in hopes to make Canadian Literature exciting and appeal to many. 2006

2007

A Change In Format

In previous years, panelists were allowed to choose five books they wanted to defend. It wasn't until this year that they were only able to choose one book to defend.

Viewers Realize The Publishing Landscape is Changing

The format of traditional publishing is changing with the influence of the selfpublishing model, as 'The Best Laid Plans' won Canada Reads in the previous year which began as a self published book.

Broadcasting Influencing Book Selection

As Sedo (2008) quotes, "How do broadcast reading programs influence readers' book choice selection?" (p.3)

For example "The Book Of Negroes" wins Canada Reads this year. In result: a sales increase of more than 35% of the already popular title. This isn't uncommon for Canada Reads contest winners, with the books highly publicized, books printed increase from a few hundred to tens of thousands.

Online Participation

This year Canada Reads has selected their theme to be selecting the most important book of the decade , as this is the year Canada Reads is approaching its 10 year anneversary. Additionally, online participation is encouraged! Canada Reads attempts to encourage online participation in selecting the books for the show.

2008

2009

2010

2011

2012

2013

Thats it! We're goin' live.

Up until this year, the Canada Reads show was pre-recorded in order to work around panelists scheduling and to ensure the appropriate number of books were printed before airing the winning book announcement. This year, CBC decided to go live. The reason is unclear, yet it is again most likely associated with a more 'thrilling' audience experience.

The Real Deal

This year Canada Reads decides on the theme of only using non-fiction works within the contest.

What do Celebrities Know About CanLit?

Many viewers begin to criticize the celebrities and their abilities to speak appropriately about Canadian Literature. Critics argue that gender, class, and race are not discussed as they should be.

'Books to Break Barriers'

In response to the accusations agains Jian Ghomeshi, Canada Reads decides to make the theme 'Books to Break Barriers' in order to encourage conversations about sexual violence, gender violence, and sexual harassment.

#Indigenousreads

A Response to Canada's 150

In response to the lack of recognition Indigenous peoples have received on Canada Reads, they have launched a response forming a new spin-off series titled: Canada Reads: The Unsettling Canada Reads: The Unsettling Canada Edition. This edition of Canada Reads (though not the actual Canada Reads series) asks Canadians to read and converse about books about the rights of Indigenous peoples. 2015

2014

Farewell Jian

Jian Ghomeshi, who was the host of Canada Reads up until this year, will be replaced by Wab Kinew as a result of sexual harrassment accusations against Ghomeshi. After this year Canada Reads has selected a different host for each new season.

The 'Starting Over' Theme

Does this theme inadvertently speak to what Canada Reads should be doing? This years Canada Reads focused on the theme of Starting Over, with topics including transformations and second chances. However at this time, Canada reads is receiving more critisism than ever, with many claiming Canada Reads focuses very little on actual cultural value. Roberts (2001) states,

"The contest's popularization, through its



2016

2017

celebrity judges, media format, and the on-line discussions that accompany the selection process, suggests that Canada Reads confers much less symbolic value upon its winning texts and their authors than it might economic value." (Roberts, 2001, p.31)

Does it benefit Canada and its readers to have a cross-country book club?

Conclusively, Canada Reads has the ability to promote Canadian Literature to a mass audience accross the country, therefore giving Canadian books a chance at becoming recognized. Additionally, Canada Reads contestants receive a large spike in sales due to the publicity, causing more sales and money being put into Canadian Literature. However, many people do not agree with the competition format of Canada Reads and feel as though it is unnecessary to make Canadian Literature compete against one another. Furthermore, the lack of recognition that Indigenous peoples receive in this competition is another issue, making many Canadians feel as though there is not an equal representation of CanLit shown on Canada Reads.

Ultimately, although there are improvements that can be made, Canada Reads creates a community and a conversation about Canadian Literature, which in itself is hugely important in order to reinforce the concept that reading Canadian Literature is extremely valuable.

SOURCES :

Fuller, D., & Sedo, D. R. (2006). A Reading Spectacle for the Nation: The CBC and "Canada Reads.". Journal Of Canadian Studies, 40(1), 5-36.

Fuller, Danielle. Canadian Literature; Vancouver Iss. 193, (Summer 2007): 11-34,182

Roberts, Gillian. Prizing Literature: The Celebration and Circulation of National Culture. Toronto: U of Toronto P, 2011. Print.

Sedo, D. R. (2008). RICHARD & JUDY'S BOOK CLUB AND
 CANADA READS': Readers, books and cultural programming in a digital era. Information, Communication & Society, 11(2), 188-206.