

Books

Financial harmony

In Mars vs Venus fashion, former Slade Point resident Rana Jewell's new book sheds light on money issues in relationships

A NEW publication will strike a chord with any couple where tension has arisen over the issue of saving or spending money.

Author, public accountant and professional belly dancer Rana Jewell penned *Couples with Financial Difference: Can a saver and a spender live in harmony?* as a result of research undertaken for a Master of Counselling and transformed an academic thesis into a rare insight into her and partner Paul's efforts to resolve their financial differences. Rana, along with a brother and two sisters, grew up on the family's Marwood cane farm and later lived at Slade Point before heading overseas at age 21. She

attended Chelona State School and Mackay State High School. "I still have strong links with Mackay. In fact, in November very close friends came to Brisbane, where I now live, for my wedding."

Rana says that she has always been fascinated by people's relationship with money.

"It is such a personal and private matter, and too confronting for most couples to deal with. When Paul and I began to experience this first hand, I decided to explore it through my thesis, never expecting that we would actually become the centre of the study. When I found a dearth of people trained in both financial and relationship counselling, the book evolved as part of my search for answers," said Rana.

Her book is an easy-to-read, practical text which takes you right into the lives of the two main characters. It's frank, baring-the-soul stuff at times but overall a positive, uplifting read that is littered with valuable lessons, and well worth having whether you are about to enter a



relationship or are already in one. Rana launches her book in Brisbane on December 20.

■ **For more information or to order a copy of *Couples with Financial Difference: Can a saver and a spender live in harmony?*, visit www.beneaththesurface.com.au.**

READER REVIEW



Reader reviewer Aggie Partridge's passion for books led her into a career as a librarian at Gordon White Library. This week she discusses guilt resolutions as she delves into Ian McEwan's 2002 novel *Atonement*, the inspiration for the newly-released screen adaptation.

Guilt-free read

A TONEMENT, Ian McEwan's ninth novel, was shortlisted for the Booker Prize in 2001.

The story begins on a hot summer's day in 1935 in the English countryside.

Thirteen-year-old Briony Tallis unwittingly witnesses two incidents involving her sister Cecilia and the housekeeper's son Robbie.

In McEwan's words, Briony is 'possessed by a desire to have the world just so'; as a budding writer, she fills in the gaps in her understanding of the incidents with her imagination, and this leads her to a single lie, which ultimately destroys her whole family.

The first part of the novel is heavy with 'a hovering stillness of nothing much seeming to happen', while rumours of war abound and the

tragic events of that day unfold.

The remainder of the book follows the fate of Robbie, Cecilia and Briony against the backdrop of World War II.

It ends in 1999 when we realise that *Atonement* is, in fact, the novel that Briony Tallis has been writing since 1940.

Does writing the novel atone for her guilt? Can the truth of the imagination actually be stronger than the real truth?

The shocking revelation at the end raises questions of the value of the imagination and the nature of fiction itself.

A film adaptation starring Keira Knightley as Cecilia and James McAvoy as Robbie is due for release this weekend, so it will be interesting to see how the film visualises this complex, tightly-woven co-existence of reality and imagination.

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