

THE BOOK LOVER'S REVIEW

Skokie Public
Library

Volume 2, Issue 3
SUMMER 2003

FEATURED GENRE: ALTERNATIVE HISTORY

History often seems to be made up of overriding forces, destinies and fate. Books classed as alternate history explore the history that might have happened if the events that shape our past had been even slightly different. These novels ask the question, "What if?" What if the South won the Civil War? What if the Roman Empire lasted another thousand years? What if President Kennedy had not been assassinated?

Allbeury, Ted.	Fic/All
Cold Tactics.	
Barnes, Steven.	SF/Bar
Zulu Heart.	
Baxter, Stephen.	SF/Bax
Voyage.	
Bisson, Terry.	SF/Bis
Fire on the Mountain.	
Bova, Ben.	Fic/Bov
Triumph.	
Card, Orson Scott.	SF/Car
Tales of Alvin Maker series	
Deighton, Len.	Fic/Dei
SS-GB: Nazi-occupied Britain. 1941	
Dick, Philip K.	SF/Dic
The Man in the High Castle.	
Niles, Douglas.	Fic/Nil
Fox on the Rhine.	

DuBois, Brendan.	Fic/Dub
Resurrection Day.	
Finney, Jack.	Fic/Fin
The Woodrow Wilson Dime.	
Garfinkle, Richard.	SF/Gar
Celestial Matters.	
Gentle, Mary.	SF/Gen
Book of Ash series	
Gibson, William.	SF/Gib
The Difference Engine.	
Harris, Robert.	Fic/Har
Fatherland.	
Harrison, Harry	SF/Har
The Hammer and the Cross.	
Norton, Andre	SF/Nor
Leopard in Exile.	
Robinson, Kim Stanley.	SF/Rob
The Years of Rice and Salt.	
Silverberg, Robert.	SF/Sil
Roma Eterna.	
Skimin, Robert.	Fic/Ski
Gray Victory.	
Stirling, S.M.	SF/Sti
The Peshawar Lancers.	
Stroyar, J.N.	Fic/Str
The Children's War.	
Tarr, Judith.	Fic/Tar
Pillar of Fire.	
Turtledove, Harry.	Fic/Tur
Guns of the South.	

UPCOMING BOOK DISCUSSIONS

Aug. 2003

**Balzac and the Little
Chinese Seamstress**
by Sijie Dai
Tuesday, August 19
at 7:30 p.m.
Thursday, August 21
at 10:00 a.m.

Sept. 2003

Empire Falls
by Richard Russo
Tuesday, September 16
at 7:30 p.m.
Thursday, September 18
at 10:00 a.m.

Oct. 2003

**Ward Number Six and
Other Stories**
by Anton Chekhov
Tuesday, October 21
at 7:30 p.m.
Thursday, October 23
at 10:00 a.m.

LITERARY QUOTATION:

"There are worse crimes than burning books. One of them is not reading them."

Joseph Brodsky



LOCUS AWARD FOR BEST FANTASY

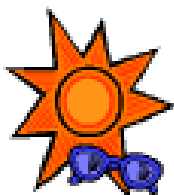
This annual award is based on a poll conducted by the magazine *Locus* which is a reviewing journal of Science Fiction and Fantasy novels.

2002	Neil Gaiman	American Gods
2001	J.K. Rowling	Harry Potter & the Prisoner of Azkaban
2000	George R.R. Martin	A Storm of Swords

FEATURED AUTHOR: TONY EARLEY



**Tony
Earley**



A few years ago, the *New Yorker* named Tony Earley one of America's best new fiction writers. All of Earley's writings are set in North Carolina, but he prefers not to be typecast as a southern writer, "I just write about a place that I know and that holds some mystery for me." He writes about ordinary people living their lives but in a straight-forward and honest style that will touch your heart. *Jim the Boy*, Earley's most popular novel, is a coming-of-age story that captures the essence of a child becoming aware of the larger world and all the joys and sorrows that come with this knowledge.

Earley grew up in Rutherfordton, North Carolina. After working for a few years as a newspaper reporter, he earned a MFA from the University of Alabama. He currently is an associate professor at Vanderbilt University, teaching creative writing.

**Tony Earley's
Writings**

Here We Are in
Paradise: Stories

Jim the Boy : a Novel

Somehow Form a
Family: Stories That
Are Mostly True

TONY EARLEY READ-A-LIKES

Although no author is just like another, the titles listed below are similar to Earley's writings, especially his coming-of-age title, *Jim the Boy*. He is known for a writing style that conveys a strong sense of place.

For the "Coming of Age"
aspects of the novel:



An American Summer

Frank Deford

Ellen Foster Kaye Gibbons

Member of the Wedding, A

Carson McCullers

Northern Borders Howard Frank Mosher

River Season Jim Black

Secret Life of Bees Sue Monk Kidd

This House of Sky Ivan Doig

World Lost Wendell Berry

The Yearling

Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings

For a similar "Sense of Place":

Cold Sassy Tree Olive Ann Burns

To Kill a Mockingbird Harper Lee

Stories From the Blue Moon Café

Sonny Brewer, Editor

Where Trouble Sleeps Clyde Edgerton

White Trash, Red Velvet Donald Seacrest

All of these novels may be found in the Fiction section of the Library shelved by the author's last name.

GOOD BOOKS YOU MAY HAVE MISSED

The Affair of the Bloodstained Egg
Cosy Mys/And
by James Anderson

A classic country house mystery set in the 30s with the typical cast of characters right down to the butler, a map of the house indicating the location of all of the suspects at the time of the murders, a stormy night, and red herrings.

Another Life Fic/And
by Donna Anders

Freelance artist Sharon Moore is caught in a nightmare. Her handsome successful husband is, in truth, a monster who has made her a virtual prisoner in his home and is systematically convincing all of their friends and neighbors that she is mentally unstable. After he has attempted to kill her one remaining friend, Sharon takes their five year-old son, Davey, and disappears to begin a new life in Seattle using the identity of a woman, Janice Young, who had died mysteriously in a fire. When Sharon begins getting death threats and encounters an intruder at night in her home, she knows someone is trying to kill her, but is it her husband or someone trying to make sure "Janice" is truly dead? A real page-turner that reads like vintage Mary Higgins Clark.

Escape from Egypt Fic/Lev
by Sonia Levitin

Jesse, a Hebrew slave to the Egyptians, falls in love with Jennat, a half-Egyptian, half-Syrian orphan that he meets when they work together making jewelry. Despite their differences, the two teenagers are very attracted to each other. As Jesse follows Moses through the desert, he struggles not only with trying to understand God's plan for his people, but also with his passion for Jennat which conflicts with his family's

wishes that he marry Talia, a very devout Hebrew woman. The very human characters in this historical fiction book demonstrate the spiritual struggles of those who witness and experience pain and suffering and find the will of God difficult to fathom. Each chapter begins with a passage from Exodus.

The Risk Pool Fic/Rus
by Richard Russo

A fabulously written story of a young boy who watches the downfall of his mother and the recklessness of his father as he grows up in a small upstate New York town. As a child, Sam Hall admired his father and saw him as a strong, tough man who is afraid of nothing and no one. After his parents split up and his mother's mental health spirals out of control, he lives alone with his dad and finds out what kind of man he really is. Russo usually writes about middle-aged men who are at a crossroads in their lives. This novel, even though it does tell the story as Sam grows up and becomes a man, focuses mostly on a young boy's formative years.

One Last Dance Fic/Gou
by Eileen Goudge

Having killed her husband on the eve of their 40th wedding anniversary party, Lydia Seagrave must come to terms with her three adult daughters and their feelings about their father. All four women had thought that their family life was nearly ideal, but now face the fact that the opposite was true. This is a family story of dutiful love and the harm that can come from not facing reality. Set in a picturesque California coast town, all four women come to terms with their conception of their father, mother and each other. Pretty predictable but enough twists to keep it interesting. For fans of Nora Roberts.



The River Midnight Fic/Nat
by Lilian Nattel

In the year between the 20th day of the Hebrew month of Tevet, 5654 and the 16th day of Kislev, 5655, corresponding to December 29th, 1893 to December 24th, 1894, many things happened in the shtetl of Blaszk, a tiny village in Russian-occupied Poland. These events mainly concerned four women, who in their youth were known as *Vilda hayas*, wild creatures, the men they married, or didn't, the children they bore, or didn't, and their transcendent bond of friendship and kinship.

Watermelon Fic/Key
by Marian Keyes

Claire's husband announces he is leaving her for another woman, while she's in the hospital, having just given birth. This unexpected turn of events results in Claire returning to her parent's home in Dublin to mourn her loss and to figure out what to do. Claire tells her story in an Ally McBealish fashion, with many outrageous and fantastic asides to the readers interspersed with the dialogue. Though she often seems frivolous, because we hear all of her inner thoughts, we know this is not the case. For fans of *Bridget Jones's Diary*.

Kaaterskill Falls Fic/Goo
by Allegra Goodman

Life in the apparently idyllic microcosm of Kaaterskill Falls, a summer community of Orthodox Jews, boils beneath the surface. Three families play out their tensions over issues of religion and secularity, obedience and self-fulfillment, patriarchy and feminism. This well crafted, multi-layered novel is recommended to discussion groups, those curious or interested in orthodox religion and readers looking for an engaging story.



Skokie Public Library

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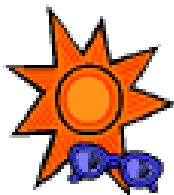
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The Book Lover’s Review is compiled by members of the Readers Services Department



REFERENCE RESOURCES

A Reader’s Guide To The Twentieth-Century Novel

Ref. Lit 016.80883 R

This is a good resource for those who want some detailed information on the important books published during the last century. At the beginning the books are listed chronologically by publication year as an indicator of which novels are summarized in this reference work. Then, year by year, there are long (some a full page, some just over a column) descriptions of the novels, giving the salient points of each story. At the end are authors’ biographies which could be useful if a reader is

looking for a SHORT blurb about a popular author. The two indexes contain listings of the authors (with titles and years) as well as a simple listing of titles included.

Major Characters In American Fiction

Ref. Lit 813.009 M
Including detailed descriptions of famous and some not-so-famous characters in recent American fiction (the focus is on characters from 19th and 20th Century novels), this source gives the age of the character, how she or he pertains to the story and other information which would help the reader pinpoint a specific character.

There are some very handy indexes with separate lists of authors, titles, and characters’ names divided alphabetically both by author and then by the title of the work. While many critical works focus on the STORY, this one focuses on the characters. There is also a listing of a character’s alternative name along with their full given name. For example, the young girl from Harper Lee’s classic novel is listed as “Scout”=Jean Louise Finch. *To Kill a Mockingbird*