



THE BOOK LOVER'S REVIEW

Skokie Public
Library

Volume 2, Issue 4
FALL 2003

FEATURED GENRE: Fairy Tales for Grown-Ups

The world of childhood is a world where magic lives, in imagination and in stories. These tales for adults recapture that world by retelling familiar childhood stories in surprising and compelling ways.

Byatt, A.S. Fic/BYA
**The Djinn in the Nightingale's
Eye: Five Fairy Stories.**

Card, Orson Scott. SF/CAR
Enchantment.

Carter, Angela. Fic/CAR
**The Bloody Chamber and
Other Stories.**

Coover, Robert. Fic/COO
Briar Rose.

Dalkey, Kara. SF/DAL
The Nightingale.

Dean, Pamela. SF/DEA
Tam Lin.

De Lint, Charles. SF/DEL
Jack the Giant-Killer.

Kushner, Ellen. SF/KUS
Thomas the Rhymer.

Lackey, Mercedes. SF/LAC
The Gates of Sleep.

Lee, Tanith. SF/LEE

White as Snow.

Lickiss, Rebecca. Fic/LIC

Never After.

Maguire, Gregory. Fic/MAG

Confessions of an Ugly Stepsister.

Marillier, Juliet. SF/MAR

Daughter of the Forest.

McKiernan, Dennis. SF/MCK

Once Upon a Winter's Night.

McKinley, Robin. Fic/MCK

**Beauty: A Retelling of the Story
of Beauty and the Beast.**

Mieville, China. SF/MIE

King Rat.

Mitchell, Stephen. Fic/MIT

**The Frog Prince: A Fairy Tale
for Consenting Adults.**

Murphy, Louise. Fic/MUR

**The True Story of Hansel and
Gretel.**

Schmitz, Anthony. Fic/SCH

**Darkest Desire: The Wolf's Own
Tale.**

Springer, Nancy. Fic/SPR

Fair Peril.

AGATHA AWARD FOR MYSTERIES

The Agatha Award honors traditional mysteries in the style of Agatha Christie. If you enjoy a mystery in which an amateur detective solves a not-too-violent crime in a cozy setting, you'll probably enjoy an Agatha winner.

2002	Donna Andrews	You've Got Murder	Mys/AND
2001	Rhys Bowen	Murphy's Law	Mys/BOW
2000	Margaret Maron	Storm Track	Mys/MAR
1999	Earlene Fowler	Mariner's Compass	Mys/FOW
1998	Laura Lippman	Butcher's Hill	Mys/LIP

UPCOMING BOOK DISCUSSIONS

Atonement

by Ian McEwan
Tuesday, November 18
at 7:30 p.m.
Thursday, November 20
at 10:00 a.m.

East of Eden

by John Steinbeck
Tuesday, January 20
at 7:30 p.m.
Thursday, January 22
at 10:00 a.m.
Wednesday, February 18
at 10:00 a.m.

Life of Pi

by Yann Martel
Tuesday, February 17
at 7:30 p.m.
Thursday, February 19
at 10:00 a.m.
Wednesday, March 17
at 10:00 a.m.

LITERARY QUOTATION:

*A room without books is
like a body without a
soul.*

Cicero



**FEATURED AUTHOR: J.R.R. TOLKIEN**

J.R.R. Tolkien has been proclaimed nothing less than the “author of the century” by readers who have repeatedly voted his *Lord of the Rings* trilogy the twentieth century’s greatest literary work. All this would have surprised the quiet Oxford don who never imagined that his writing would appeal to more than a select circle of readers.



**J.R.R.
Tolkien**

Tolkien was born in 1892 in South Africa although his family soon moved to England where he pursued an academic career, specializing in Old English literature. His vast knowledge of languages and literature served him well as he created “Middle Earth,” a fully realized mythical world populated by wizards, elves, dwarves, dragons, and Tolkien’s own creation, hobbits. He first described this world in his book *The Hobbit* for young readers, and later explored it in much greater length, detail, and seriousness in the three volumes known collectively as the *Lord of the Rings*. He continued to work on the history of Middle Earth until his death in 1973, and the papers he left behind formed the basis for *The Silmarillion*, a grimmer and less accessible prehistory to the events told in *The Hobbit* and the *Lord of the Rings*.

**J.R.R. Tolkien’s
Writings**

The Hobbit

The *Lord of the Rings*:

- 1. The Fellowship of the Ring**
- 2. The Two Towers**
- 3. The Return of the King**

The Silmarillion

J.R.R. TOLKIEN READ-A-LIKES

Although no one author is exactly like another, the novels listed below are all epic fantasy sagas set in richly imagined medieval worlds reminiscent of Tolkien’s Middle Earth.

Brooks, Terry. The *Shannara* series. SF/BRO

- 1. The Sword of Shannara.**
- 2. The Elfstones of Shannara.**
- 3. The Wishsong of Shannara.**

Le Guin, Ursula K. The *Earthsea* Trilogy. SF/LEG

- 1. A Wizard of Earthsea.**
- 2. The Tombs of Atuan.**
- 3. The Farthest Shore.**

Martin, George R.R. *A Song of Ice and Fire* series. SF/MAR

- 1. A Game of Thrones.**

- 2. A Clash of Kings.**
- 3. A Storm of Swords.**

Kay, Guy Gavriel. The *Fionavar Tapestry* series. SF/KAY

- 1. The Summer Tree.**
- 2. The Wandering Fire.**
- 3. The Darkest Road.**

Williams, Tad. *Memory, Sorrow, and Thorn* series. SF/WIL

- 1. The Dragonbone Chair.**
- 2. Stone of Farewell.**
- 3. To Green Angel Tower.**

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



GOOD BOOKS YOU MAY HAVE MISSED

Straight Man Fic/RUS *by Richard Russo*

William Devereaux, an English professor at a small New England liberal arts college, is temporarily in charge of the department, a role he is not fond of. Between the bickering and struggles of his co-workers and troubles he is having at home, his mid-life is becoming one big crisis. This is definitely Russo's most humorous novel—the scene with the duck is just out and out funny. Devereaux is a very vivid, flawed character who just comes to life very clearly on each page

The Devil in the White City: Murder, Magic, and Madness at the Fair that Changed America 364.1523 L *by Erik Larson*

As you read about the World's Columbian Exposition from conception to completion and the appalling tales of Herman Mudgett, you can't help but feel nostalgic when you discover the humble beginnings of the many individuals and products that were born of this era. For the millions of people who attended, nothing could compare to the magic of the "White City." Conversely, there were many who described their experiences as much darker and far from magical. In a story that runs parallel to the creation of the World's Fair, we discover the "Devil" in Herman Mudgett who preys on young women seeking employment, lodging, or companionship in the hotel he builds to accommodate the fair goers. In this fascinating true story that reads like a novel, Erik Larson tells the gruesome account of the first serial killer in the United States alongside the dedication of the thousands of individuals who worked to share their brilliance and innovation to produce the Columbian Exposition and the many creations that we enjoy over a century later.

Darkness Peering Fic/BLA *by Alice Blanchard*

In the first section of this suspense novel, the Chief of Police of a small Maine town discovers the body of a missing fourteen-year-old girl in a cow pasture. When evidence points to the possible involvement of his teen-aged son, the Chief faces a crippling emotional and moral crisis. The second section takes place in the 1990s. Rachel, the Chief's daughter, has followed in her father's footsteps and become a police detective, moving into the family home after the deaths of her parents. Her brother, now in his 30s, works at a local school for blind and visually impaired children. When a young female teacher at the school goes missing, elements of the case remind Rachel of the earlier unsolved crimes and raise old doubts about her brother. This book features an intricate plot and good characterizations.

I Don't Know How She Does It: The Life of Kate Reddy, Working Mother Fic/PEA *by Allison Pearson*

Kate Reddy, financial analyst and broker with a major British firm, is also a wife and mother of two small children. Working long hours and regularly traveling on business, she is torn between her passion for her work and her maternal urges and guilt about not being home with her children. Using a combination of emails, ridiculous, revealing "to do" lists, and commentary on her high-speed life from the boardroom to the bedroom, Kate's voice is comic, sardonic and sincerely insightful. Gradually, Kate realizes that she must make some fundamental changes in her life. How she does this without sacrificing her talents or anything she values provides fascinating reading.

Defense for the Devil Mys/WIL *by Kate Wilhelm*

Defense attorney Barbara Holloway must juggle many things in this mystery. Getting a quarter of a million dollars transferred to her client and still defending her client's brother-in-law from a murder charge puts her on a slippery conflict of interest balance beam. As always, her lawyer-father helps, but his law firm no longer wants Barbara's dangerous cases. To make matters worse, her new husband walks out, unwilling to have his children face the dangerous climate of her work. When the trial starts, there is no better courtroom drama than one of Wilhelm's Barbara Holloway novels.

The Photograph Fic/LIV *by Penelope Lively*

The novel opens with Glyn Peters finding an envelope marked "Don't Open – Destroy" in a closet in his home. Inside the envelope is a photograph of his deceased wife Katherine and her sister's husband surreptitiously holding hands. As he stares at the photograph, he becomes aware that his perception of his wife may not be the true Katherine. Glyn becomes obsessed with determining if his wife was having an affair and begins to interrogate family and friends with no thought to the impact of these interviews. Many of Penelope Lively's novels are concerned with her characters' memories and how the present and the past are intertwined, and this novel is no exception. This is a wonderful novel that explores relationships in our modern society.

September Rom/PIL *by Rosamunde Pilcher*

This novel brings several families together, in more ways than one, to a birthday party in the middle of September in Strathcroy, Scotland. Each family's epic past is followed and their intertwining lives are tracked. The novel includes dark secrets, romance, carefully drawn characters, and plenty of scenery. Recommended to those who enjoy Maeve Binchy.

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



FEATURED WEB SITE: READING GROUP GUIDES

www.readinggroupguides.com

Because of the popularity of book discussion groups, many publishers now regularly commission special reading guides for the books they think are most suitable for discussion. These guides usually contain overviews of a book and brief biographies of its author and then a series of questions designed to get people talking about it more critically.

This is where Reading Group Guides comes in. The site gathers together over a thousand reading guides into one easily-searched collection. You can browse the guides by author or title, or you can search by such categories as "Classics," "Bestsellers," "Men's Interests," and "Short Stories."

While the guides are the heart of this Web site, it also contains much else of interest for book club members such as suggestions for running a successful group and even recipes for what to eat while carrying on your discussions.

REFERENCE RESOURCES

If you're looking for something to read, either for your book club or just for your own pleasure, the following books will come in handy. In addition to providing advice on starting and running a successful book club, they supply lists of recommended titles for discussions.

Ellington, Elisabeth and Freimiller, Jane.

A Year of Reading: A Month-by-Month Guide to Classics and Crowd-Pleasers for You and Your Book Group. 011.73 E PBK

This book recommends five titles for each month of the year and provides discussion questions for them.

Jacobsohn, Rachel W.

The Reading Group Handbook: Everything You Need to Know, from Choosing Members to Leading Discussions. 374.22 J PBK

This handbook contains numerous lists of recommended titles.

McMains, Victoria Golden.

The Readers' Choice: 200 Book Club Favorites. 028.1 M PBK

The titles in this book were pulled from the suggestions of over 70 book groups. Each of the 200 picks gets about a page of description and a few discussion questions.

Pearlman, Mickey.

What to Read: The Essential Guide for Reading Group Members and Other Book Lovers. 015.73 P PBK

This book lists thousands of titles under 33 subject headings. Each book is summarized in a sentence or two.

Slezak, Ellen.

The Book Group Book: A Thoughtful Guide to Forming and Enjoying a Stimulating Book Discussion Group. 374.22 B PBK

Primarily a guide to running a book club, this book contains many lists of recommended titles for discussion, although without summaries.