



BookMarks!

You've got to read this!

Produced by:

CPCC Libraries

Volume 2, Issue 2

May 15, 2006

Quick Picks

BookMarks Check List

Books I want to read:

The Lost Painting ***

*The Brief History of the Dead****

*City of Fallen Angels****

The Stranger Beside Me

*The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Nighttime****

*Otherwise Engaged***

*Christ the Lord****

*Mr. Darcy Takes a Wife*****

*The Wife***

*My Life in France*****

*Pride and Prejudice***

*The Color of Water****

Ratings Scale

* - Eww! I just found a tick on me.

** - Flies are at the picnic and landing on the food.

*** - Lounging in a hammock with a cool breeze blowing.

**** - I just won a fortune and am retiring to a sunny island.

The Vexations of Life

As Charlotte Collins so aptly puts it, "There will always be vexations." I think she was talking about marriage and the fact that she had married Mr. Collins meant that she had more than her fair share of vexations. My particular vexation deals with the generalities of book-to-movie issues (or miniseries, if that's the case). Take *Pride and Prejudice*. Being a Pride or Prejudite or whatever you call people who are part of the group who swears by all that is holy that the BBC miniseries production of *Pride and Prejudice* is the definitive visual work on Austen's fantastic novel, I am vexed by Hollywood even thinking they can touch this. Granted, I haven't seen the new movie version and really do want to, but I already know that they can't possibly do in 2 hours what BBC did in 5 glorious hours. I think there is also some feeling that Colin Firth really is Mr. Darcy, but that is a separate issue. What about you? Are there books that you love that were made into movies that vexed you beyond reason? What about ones that were made into great movies or miniseries? But we don't even have to be exclusive to movies. Have you read a novel that you really enjoyed only to hear it trashed by others? Let's reclaim these great works and make them fresh and exciting to others once more!



A classic *Pride and Prejudice*, indeed!



BookMarks: Meet Lawrence Toppman

Lawrence Toppman, movie critic at *The Charlotte Observer*, will speak at [CPCC Libraries' BookMarks](#) event from 12:30 – 1:30 p.m., Monday, March 15, in LRC 404.

If you love books and are always in search of the next great read, you will want to attend this gathering. BookMarks isn't a book club, but rather an easy and fun way to get lots of book recommendations from your fellow book-lovers.

Come and hear Lawrence delight us with his words. Drinks and desserts will be provided. Sign up for BookMarks in LearnerWeb for professional development credit.

The Lost Painting

By Jonathan Harr

This is a 6 CD unabridged audio book narrated by Campbell Scott. I'll confess I'm an impressionist fan. I love Monet and Degas. I remember vaguely in Art History class of my professor talking about Caravaggio and the light in his paintings, but they just seemed, well, too Italian. I really enjoyed this audio book. A young art history graduate student is asked to do some research on a Caravaggio painting. Along the way, she makes some headway in finding a lost Caravaggio painting, "The Taking of Christ." It is a real life mystery set in Rome. Those that love Caravaggio are rabid fans, on the level with fans of James Dean and Marilyn Monroe. I felt the audio book gave more detail than I wanted about Caravaggio's life. Overall, I enjoyed the audio book and am willing to reevaluate my opinion of the Italian painter.

—Anne Egger



The Brief History of the Dead

by Kevin Brockmeier

Kevin Brockmeier has found a clever premise for answering the age-old question of what happens when we die. After crossing over, the newly deceased take up residence in the City (find homes, jobs, friends, etc), seemingly for as long as someone living remembers them. When a deadly virus spreads among the living, the City begins to change. The stories of the dead are intimately interwoven (chapter by chapter) with the life and memories of Laura Byrd. The connections between Laura and the Dead, as well as the cause of the virus, are slowly revealed as Brockmeier's story progresses. Andrew Greer of the Washington Post writes, "It's a striking premise and, for much of the novel, deftly told through hints and rumors." BookMarks fans will remember this novel as one of the titles mentioned by Charlotte Observer Book Editor Jeri Krentz.—Jennifer Arnold

City of the Falling Angels

by John Berendt

Those of us who quickly turned pages in this author's first book, *Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil*, will not be disappointed in this story of Venice, its artisans, its politicians and its admirers, most of whom resemble in some way the "falling angels" of the Santa Maria della Salute Church. The story revolves around the 1996 fire that destroyed the Venice Opera House, the Fenice (Fi-nee-chee), and those who loved it and Venice enough to restore it. Save your money for a trip to Venice because the book creates a wanderlust tug for the canals, the waters and the architecture of one of the most beautiful places on earth.—Margie Orell



The Stranger Beside Me

by Ann Rule

Ann Rule recalls a moment when she advised her daughter, during a wave of murders of young women, to be careful during an outing. Her friend, also with Ann as she warned her daughter, told Ann not to worry: her daughter would not be harmed. Who was this friend? The serial killer Ted Bundy. *The Stranger Beside Me* recounts Ann's friendship with Ted before, during, and after his vicious killing spree. The book is gripping without being too graphic and gives an honest portrait of Bundy. Although this book has not been the basis for a movie, it is a good foundation from which to compare Bundy movies and documentaries. Ann mentions a film starring Mark Harmon (can that man be really convincing as an evil guy?) that portrays Ted as always sure of himself when she knew otherwise. His feelings of inferiority were a strong part of what drove his obsession to murder. This is a good insight into the life of Ted Bundy that lays the facts bare and never invites you to feel sorry for him.—Gena Moore

The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time

by Mark Haddon

When a neighbor's dog is brutally murdered, Christopher, an autistic teenager, decides to find out who the killer is and write a book about it. Soon he finds that the identity of the killer isn't the only mystery. The story reads as if Christopher had written it, making this book like nothing I've ever read before. It was thoroughly enjoyable. Christopher's inner monologue is at once insightful, clever, and humorous. At one point he explains why he must plan his days in detail using a time-table. He elaborates that unlike physical space where you can see where you are going with your eyes, time is invisible and without a map of time one could become lost in time. My time reading this book flew right by. There is a movie adaptation scheduled for US release sometime in 2006. So make sure you read this before you see it! —**Steve Osler**

OTHERWISE ENGAGED

by Eileen Goudge

If you have ever wished you could change places with your best friend, this book is for you. Jessie Holland is a New York writer for Savvy magazine while her best friend Erin Delahanty and husband, Skip, run a bed-and-breakfast in Arizona. When Skip walks out on Erin, and Jessie's love affair stalls with divorced Jonathan Silver, bureau chief for a news agency, they decide to trade lives for six months. Jessie will run the inn and Erin will pursue a dream job in New York.

Predictably, both women become entangled with other men, new life directions beckon and major decisions must be made when minds and hearts are conflicted.—**Sonia Coffin**

Christ the Lord

by Anne Rice

This is an 8 CD, unabridged audio book narrated by Josh Heine. I have never before read a book by Anne Rice. I saw the movie *An Interview with a Vampire* and found the movie depressing. My co-worker recommended this book to me. I was dubious, but I respected her opinion, so I thought I would try it out. I loved it. What I especially loved was a much better perspective on Joseph, a large quiet man who acts as a protector of Jesus. Anne Rice views Jesus in the same way as Superman, a young boy who doesn't understand his own gifts or why he possesses them. Rice writes the book with Jesus as the narrator, which can get a little irritating at times. I thought Josh Heine did a decent job as narrator. I really enjoyed listening to this book.—**Anne Egger**

Mr. Darcy Takes a Wife

by Linda Berdoll

Here's a sequel to *Pride and Prejudice* (one of many) which is really done right--a fun, sexy romp in Pemberly with the characters you've grown to love. Elizabeth and Darcy have married and are on their way to start their lives at Pemberly, Darcy's massive estate. Berdoll's Elizabeth is still the feisty, headstrong character you remember from Austen's original, and she and Darcy definitely have a passionate marriage that is the basis for the story. Meddlesome neighbors, illegitimate heirs, marital adjustments, irritating family members and lots of steamy love scenes in between equal a fun read that's much less conservative but just as enjoyable as the original story it's based on! - **Erin Payton**

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Pride and Prejudice

by Jane Austen

I finally got around to reading P&P after all the people who ADORE Jane Austen recommended it, and...eh. Maybe I'm not sophisticated enough to appreciate her literary style. Regardless, the story is still good: P&P

centers on Mr. Darcy (the "Pride"), a rich, seemingly cold individual who visits a small English town with his friend Charles Bingley and both immediately catch the eyes of Mrs. Bennet, a shrewd (and shrewish) wife and mother of 5 daughters who wants to marry them off well (and by well she means "with money"). Daughter Elizabeth (the "Prejudice"), a great heroine in modern fiction, meets Darcy and finds him difficult, elitist, and completely rude. Of course, you know in the end they will fall madly in love. For those who don't enjoy Austen's style, the 5-hour BBC series (made famous by a scene in which a then-unknown Colin Firth [Darcy] takes a dive in a pond and emerges soaking wet) is superb, as is the more accessible (and shorter) but just as enjoyable 2005 movie with Keira Knightley as Elizabeth. - Erin Payton



The Wife

by Meg Wolitzer

A fast and good read about a marriage from "the wife's" point of view. Enroute to Helsinki where he will be presented with a literary prize, Joan rehearses what she will say to Joe when she tells him that she is leaving him. The history of this university couple is revealed from its beginning with their torrid student-teacher affair. The marriage replays the student-teacher motif over and over again for half a century with his dalliances with younger and younger students and his growing fame as a writer. Hers is a life that spins around his. The plot twists and turns until the very last when the reader really wonders who is the teacher and who is the student. Not an O. Henry finish but pretty close. Good book to take with you while waiting in a doctor's office or in the line at the DMV. It might also be a good choice for a book club. Lots to talk about! - Margie Orell

My Life in France

by Julia Child with Alex Prud'homme

I confess I adore Julia Child. A large woman with an odd voice and very knowledgeable about French cooking. A woman who lived each moment with joy. This book was written in collaboration with her great nephew towards the end of her life. This book talks about her early years with Paul Child, her husband. They were in Paris from 1948-1951. Then they were in Marseilles for a year. Paul was in the diplomatic corps. Julia was determined to learn French and to learn to cook "properly". She talks about working on Mastering the Art of French cooking Volume I, and being afraid it would never be published. I really enjoyed this book. I got a good feeling for the times and a better understanding of her relationship with Paul. Bon Appetit! - Anne Egger

The Color of Water

By James McBride

I had the pleasure of hearing James McBride speak in March 2005. He spoke candidly about the pitfalls of writing about one's family and their reactions to it. He wanted to encourage students to stay in school, keep focused and not become angry. I was very impressed with his concern for young men and women who were trying to get an education. I had every intention of reading his book but never got around to it until this spring. What a treat. This black man's account of being raised by a white Jewish woman is better than fiction. I don't think anyone could have made this up. Her family disowns her, she becomes a Christian, and she survives two husbands. Somehow she manages to bring up her twelve children in the projects and gets them all through college. McBride struggles with finding his niche and switches between writing for several major newspapers and playing saxophone in jazz clubs. The author decides to find out more about his mother's family and how this relates to him and who he is. Often humorous and very endearing, this is a book I would recommend to anyone.—Pam Englebert