Bibliotherapy – Cedar Sanderson

Cedar Sanderson

A meta-analysis of the utilization of, and reading recommendations for effective bibliotherapy in a non-clinical setting.

Bibliotherapy is the use of reading to improve mental health, reduce anxiety, and increase ‘mindfulness.’

Firstly, what is mindfulness? Psychology Today defines it neatly. “Mindfulness is a state of active, open attention on the present. When you’re mindful, you observe your thoughts and feelings from a distance, without judging them good or bad. Instead of letting your life pass you by, mindfulness means living in the moment and awakening to experience.” In other words, rather than flowing through life on autopilot, we pay attention to our surroundings, to the people around us, and more important, to why we react and feel the way we do. This self-analysis is vital to living in harmony with our self, and with others. A good thing. And reading can enhance it?

A study published in Explore: The Journal of Science and Healing, examines the result of a small pilot trial of only 37 people, finding that fully 89% of them completed it, and the majority reported a reduction in stress, anxiety, and an improvement in mindfulness and resilience. What were they reading? Materials on how to reduce stress, without training, simply given the material to read. This is interesting, but perhaps not appealing to the average reader.

I would insist that books which portray resilience and mindfulness in the characters, without being written specifically to instruct the reader in how to reduce stress and anxiety, are as efficacious in obtaining the desired result.

In the early 1800s when bibliotherapy was first being explored as a treatment (alongside other methods), “It will be useful, as soon as out patients begin to discover any marks of the revival of mind, to oblige them to apply their eye to some simple and entertaining book,” Benjamin Rush wrote. While this is evidently targeted at those who had broken down enough to become a patient, what if the bibliotherapy was instituted much earlier, with the idea of preventative care rather than palliative? In addition, the idea was not met with overall approval. Isaac Ray wrote that “Cheap novels and trashy newspapers are more a cause than a cure of insanity.” The therapy endured, though, and became much recommended whether it was simply to allow the weary mind to escape daily tedium, to meditate, or to seek self-improvement.

In 2012, a study in Clinical Psychology and Psychotherapy showed quite clearly that bibliotherapy was effective in cases of subthreshold depression. “The results indicated that cognitive bibliotherapy resulted in statistically and clinically significant changes both in depressive symptoms and cognitions, which were maintained at follow-up. In contrast, placebo was only associated with a temporary decrease in depressive symptoms, without significant cognitive changes.” Subthreshold depression is difficult to define, and has no clear treatment. Most would term it merely a case of the blues. However, most young adults and adults would admit that this is a condition they have found themselves in at some point. Reading, it seems, is an effective self-therapy.

Preventative care, then can be helpful. The study I referenced above followed a group of people for a year. They were given books to read that were not challenging – a 6thgrade reading level – and rated ‘highly interesting.’ The participants then discussed their reading monthly.

The interactive facet of this therapy seems to be an important part of it becoming truly effective for some, and for some purposes, although it is commonly carried out with private readings. A study of a Read-Aloud Group Bibliotherapy for the elderly: an Exploration of cognitive and social transformation, explored the use of group discussions to increase the mind’s ability to remember, endure, and heal.

“The idea that literature plays a role in healing has prevailed within nearly all human societies. From the distant past to the present day, humans have witnessed the extraordinary ability of literature to touch the soul, broaden the mind, enhance the imagination and invigorate the human spirit” (Katrina
We are convinced, then, that bibliotherapy is a tool we can use in our own lives to improve our minds, our stress levels, and quality of life. How shall we go about this?

We can read to improve our minds, seeking out interesting books that instruct us without dwelling on ‘morbid thoughts’ (Galt, 1953). Historical books, references that improve our professional aspects, those can be part of the prescribed bibliography. Challenging our perceptions, too, is important. As is conversation about what we have read.

Beyond that is the use of reading for our physical health. Psychoneuroimmunology as described by Dr Gene Cohen is the phenomenon where stimulation of the central nervous system enhances the immune system. He reports that ‘an involvement in the arts associate with positive feelings triggers a response in the brain.’ His findings are supported by a study published by the University of Tokyo, which found in a two-pronged study of nearly 100 participants: “Study 1 revealed that participants felt more relaxed after reading positive poems with either personal or social content than after reading negative ones, and they felt least refreshed and calm after reading negative poems with personal content. Study 2 showed that participants reported less depressed feelings, both after reading an excerpt from an explanatory leaflet and after a controlled rest period.”

We conclude, then, that the content used for bibliotherapy is important. Negative, depressing, morbid, and nihilist materials are almost worse than nothing at all. For most, this is not surprising, as the twig is inclined, so grows the tree. However, an examination of popular literature shows that the quality for bibliotherapy must be considered. Dystopian, horror, or ‘literary’ fiction should be avoided. Instead, stories that offer insights into the resilience of the human character, which may go through a valley of despair but in the end offer hope and portrayal of personal growth, these should be offered for bibliotherapy. Uplifting personal stories, which can offer the reader a pleasant escape are not to be scorned, but rather sought out as a mental exercise in relaxation.

Through the pages of a novel, or a particularly well-done biography or historical sketch, the reader can find solace and solutions for their own struggles. However, the overly negative or heavy-handed treatments will not be effective. Choose the materials wisely.

Finally, discussion and group participation can be of further use in the alleviation of feelings of loneliness and irrelevance, and to help the reader become more socially active while stimulating their mind. Keeping in mind that a positive atmosphere is as important here as it is between the covers of the book, the group should be chosen carefully, and a route to withdraw from that group should be available if the dynamic becomes toxic. Online groups can be variable, with exiting them being simple, but they lack the face-to-face interaction that can be beneficial for the lonely.

In closing, consider this from a study carried out in Army Hospitals, “men bore their hardships more easily by reason of reading matter that either diverted or nourished them in some mysterious way.” (Jack and Ronan, 2008). What would you consider to be a nutritious book, then? A diverting one?

Bibliography


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170 RESPONSES TO “BIBLIOTherapy – Cedar Sanderson”

David, infamous sockpuppet | August 24, 2015 at 10:58 am |

I can really see how literature would provide therapy and make people feel better, especially if the literature in question was, say, a copy of “War and Peace” applied forcefully and repeatedly to the temple of certain individuals we won’t name, but whose monikers rhyme with “Bike Flyer” and “Hatrick Payden.”

Cedar Sanderson | August 24, 2015 at 11:11 am |

I think that’s a different kind of therapy, but you made me laugh.

Vakkotaur | August 24, 2015 at 11:18 am |

I believe that is called “percussive maintenance.”

Cedar Sanderson | August 24, 2015 at 11:21 am |

I’m a STEM student. I have some textbooks (glances at Calculus book) which would work nicely.

David, infamous sockpuppet | August 24, 2015 at 12:38 pm |

That’s a waste of a perfectly good text book. Go get a Women’s Studies text (ie complete waste of the paper it’s printed on) and use that instead.

Cedar Sanderson | August 24, 2015 at 12:46 pm |

*shudder* I love school and learning, but I have limits. Or standards. Or something.

Vakkotaur | August 24, 2015 at 12:52 pm |

I recommend a late 1960s or early 1970s Electronic Circuits Manual. massive, but not as unwieldy as an unabridged dictionary. And something that can be appreciated for its content., even if largely historical nowadays.

William O. B’Livion | August 24, 2015 at 1:58 pm |

You don’t have to take the class, just get the book from the dumpster behind the school book store after the semester ends.

cpschosfield | August 24, 2015 at 3:19 pm |

It’ll be in the dumpster that smells of rotting shellfish.

William O. B’Livion | August 24, 2015 at 5:36 pm |

How can you tell the difference between rotting shellfish and the non-rotting kind?

harryvoyager | August 24, 2015 at 10:43 pm |

One of them smells bad.

Zsuzsa | August 24, 2015 at 1:30 pm |

Calculus books are insufficient for this purpose. Biology books, which have to include detailed discussion of how things work in a three domains of life, plus all the exceptions to every general rule laid out, are much better.

TXRed | August 24, 2015 at 2:31 pm |

Chicago manual of Style 14th Edition (because they are now on 16th, and I use the 15th.)

TRX | August 24, 2015 at 3:42 pm |

I once upset an English teacher who regarded the Chicago Manual of Style as the ultimate arbiter of the English language.

“If it’s so great, then why don’t our textbooks follow it?” (and for bonus points, why didn’t she use it?)
As far as I can tell, most of our textbooks were poorly translated out of foreign languages with different subject-verb orders and tenses than ordinary English, or even Chicago English.

Carolyn Cherry had and may still have a long post on the Chicago Manual of Style. It's not her choice of guide with examples.

I don't know if anyone still uses Turabian's style guide. Also the APA guide.

You might damage the textbooks if you struck such dense targets with them. ;-p

I paid too much for these books to risk that.

You might damage your own hands! I have carpal tunnel (have had surgery on both wrists) and I don't think I would want to risk damaging my wrists by using some of the heavier text books as a weapon!

Percussive maintenance is for machines. For humans the term is wall-to-wall therapy.

Some machines are more bioillogical than others.

Heinlein offers a good deal of bibliotherapy in his juveniles, for example, this discussion of Have Spacesuit, Will Travel

The philosophy of the book, given here its first expression, is, like the structure of the book as a whole, expressed in at first small local realms, then in wider and wider ones. As in this case, where Kip undertakes a systematic effort at adequate preparation to cope with a statistical universe. That it comes out as, to take some examples, buying a rubber stamp, selling soap with a zeal great enough to get him an entry-level position at Fowler Shocken (not that with his other attributes he'd have gone any higher), and taking a daring late-night May Day drive to the Big City to get things postmarked (his boss, the pharmacist at the drugstore soda parlor where he works, drove him; one would expect given Mr. Russell's low-profile life-style that he wouldn't have a car, but even back in the fifties every teen worth his own self-respect had to have a driver's license, and we will see that Kip's boss trusts him no end) is a consequence of the context. All this systematic effort only comes out funny because that was how Heinlein covered up his serious intent to slip it by you.

http://members.iglou.com/jtmajor/HaveSuit.htm

By modelling behaviour in his character's development Heinlein is providing a clear example of how to address a problem.

I'd say that book is a classic example of a character modeling for the reader, especially when you consider the audience. A book written for an adult isn't going to do quite the same, but for a child the initiative Kip takes and the ways his father (especially) push him rather than handing things to him could be (were, in my case) very inspiring.

I know that some books I don't read because, no matter how interested in them I am, I don't feel up to the work involved. If I just read them I'd probably find them more relaxing and less exhausting than I expect but I sometimes look at my “to be read” pile with dread. (Somehow arguing on the internet is *lower* demand?)
suppose it was signaling “poor but worthy” but even when I was a kid it made me think that I ought to be tidy. Never quite managed it, but I felt that I ought, and felt that I could.

I do like books where the protagonist has a can-do attitude. I suppose some would imagine that means that I want books full of people with blessed and successful lives, but that isn’t it at all. Or that wanting a hyper-competent protag means someone without flaws. We all understand why Empress Teresa sucks, right? But I’m perfectly able to give up in despair all on my own without the help of fiction. In a book I want someone who doesn’t give up and it’s fun to imagine myself oh, young, pretty, and brilliant instead of something closer to the truth. (Or if not young pretty and brilliant, then old, crotchety, tougher than nails… and brilliant.)

I appreciate the value of reading about a character that prevails against odds because it actually is inspiring and does help me to think that I, too, could prevail against odds, and I don’t even have to save the world.

Vakkotaur | August 24, 2015 at 12:58 pm |

Tenacity. Or, if you prefer, cussed stubbornness.

I too had/have that feeling that things should be neat and that I never quite manage. Instead of I have a sort of mess/untidiness relaxation oscillator, it seems. Things get worse and worse until I snap and Commit A Neatness (thank you M*A*S*H) and get things at least almost organized, and then the cycle resumes.

Old NFO | August 24, 2015 at 12:28 pm |

I had never thought of reading as therapy, but in hindsight it is! Thanks for the education!!!

Cedar Sanderson | August 24, 2015 at 12:45 pm |

Absolutely, and choosing the right books can really make a difference. I think it’s really cool that reading can actually affect your immune system. Who would have thought that curling up with a good book could heal?

emily61 | August 24, 2015 at 1:59 pm |

reading the wrong stuff can torpedo you. I read this over angsty piece of fanfic, it made me cry, and it made me miserable for 24 hours. It may have made my pain levels spike. I have osteoarthritis and I’m recovering from two broken shoulders.

Cedar Sanderson | August 24, 2015 at 3:00 pm |

Ouch ! I recommend Georgette Heyer's The Foundling, it's a silly piece of fluff that might make you laugh and feel better.

Mary | August 24, 2015 at 3:22 pm |

I resort to children's books and YA when I'm under the weather. Classics I've already read, usually.

freeholder45 | August 24, 2015 at 6:01 pm |

This is why I don't read (or watch) horror stories, or stories with a lot of scary suspense to the plot. It's also why I want stories with good endings. It doesn't have to be 'happily ever after' (although that's nice), but it has to be a good, satisfying ending.

emily61 | August 24, 2015 at 12:31 pm |

Interesting post.

Cedar Sanderson | August 24, 2015 at 12:44 pm |

Thanks. I know it's a bit different, but writing research papers is second nature and this topic seemed right.

emily61 | August 24, 2015 at 1:52 pm |

Great palate cleanser after all the Hugo news. This Hugo business seems like SF's Ferguson.

The Other Sean | August 24, 2015 at 2:45 pm |

#GoodPlotsMatter

New Class Traitor | August 24, 2015 at 2:51 pm |
Good timing, Cedar. I've already started shifting my reading patterns to get rid of anything not positive. Same with other entertainment, especially music.

For a new writer, the whole Hugo nonsense is tremendously demoralizing and demotivating. Since I hate surrendering control of my inner world to knuckleheads, I'm going to be dropping out of the blogosphere for a bit to recharge. Between the nastiness in the writing world and the doping problems in my other retreat, running, things seem a bit grim. On the plus side, I'm lousy at quitting. I think it's my one major skill.

I'll work, write, run, coach some junior high kids in cross country (which is ALWAYS a hoot), and hang out with my best friend. I've got a long trip planned, to Kenya for seven weeks early next year. Curious to see what happens when I get unplugged for that long.

There is a reason that I am very selective about which blogs I read, and even more choosy about the comment sections I hang out in. Here, Mad Genius Club, and the Passive Voice off the top of my head. You can find positive, helpful voices to engage with, MGC if you're working on writing is a good one. The nastiness will pass quickly.

That being said, I'm off facebook for the foreseeable future. I miss interacting with friends and family there, but I don't miss the onslaught of emotional blackmail by those who want me to think just like they do. So I'm blogging and writing and focusing on school. Teaching, you are right, is always fulfilling (I'm a student in University, but have taught).

I respect and applaud your decision to avoid the chit storm that is social media at this time. I still dip my toe in, but I'm retired, got the time, and nothing much anyone can do to hurt me. You have kids, and that boy toy, and your studies topping your priority list. I hope that includes continuing progress on your fiction as well.

As I mentioned on FB to your husband (I know how much you like that term) I have a graduate education in engineering and a quarter century of manned space operations experience. If that skill set can help you in your studies or your writing you need but ask.

Thank you Uncle Lar. I will take advantage of that, I think. Physics and Calc and Analytical Chem… I'm a bit worried. Math and I are not friends.
3. Repeat working on it as many times as you can
   If possible.
4 talk to professor about it.
5 Look at the notes of someone who is doing well in the class.

Good Luck!

**Uncle Lar** | August 24, 2015 at 5:04 pm |
What Emily said.
Remember math is all about rules and tools.
Memorize the rules, then learn and practice working with the tools until they become familiar and natural. If something doesn't make sense then get help or back down to a lower level and work back up. Math builds on itself, so at least in my case each level didn't really come together until I started in on the next one.
Most STEM tracks use math as a sieve to weed out the lazy or unprepared student. You are neither, so don't let a bit of math phobia get you down.
You may want to consider modifying your stance on FB to the extent that we use it as a vehicle for tutoring Cedar or at least giving you some hints and encouragement.

**Zachary Ricks** | August 25, 2015 at 11:39 am |
You and math are friends. You just don't know it yet.
I've heard good things about “How to Solve It” by Polya.

**Cedar Sanderson** | August 25, 2015 at 12:27 pm |
I will look it up. So far, it's ok, but we're still in review mode really.

**Cedar Sanderson** | August 25, 2015 at 12:37 pm |
I like math, it's beautiful. But I'm slow at it. So exams are... shall we say tiresome?

**New Class Traitor** | August 24, 2015 at 3:00 pm |
There are a number of reasons I Facebook (and everything else not directly related to work) under a num de plume. One of them is that I feel free to tell anybody who tries to engage in emotional blackmail of that type the Churchillian answer.
Secretary: “Mr. Churchill, X and Y are here...”
Churchill: “Tell them to go and b*gger themselves.”
Secretary goes away, Winston stops him.
Churchill: “Please clarify this instruction is not meant literally.”

**Cedar Sanderson** | August 24, 2015 at 3:03 pm |
As an author, facebook is a useful tool. As a person, it lets me socialize in a way I can't in person. But that's not to say it isn't a two-edged sword. Looking back, publishing under a penname would have been good. But I had no idea I'd ever have fans (still seems unreal, actually).

**FlyingMike** | August 24, 2015 at 3:07 pm |
I am Not Unreal! Nor am I the square root of -1!

**Cedar Sanderson** | August 24, 2015 at 3:12 pm |
which begs the question. Does having an imagination make one imaginary?

**Uncle Lar** | August 24, 2015 at 5:08 pm |
Imaginary numbers such as the square root of -1 and infinity are placeholders, conveniences that allow mathematicians to make certain equations work. They have no basis in reality. You young lady are very real indeed. I've seen you in person.
Reality, *hmph*. I live perpendicular to reality, thank you very much. “$j$ is just a concept”, indeed.

For a counter-example see Geometric Algebra. In 2-D, for instance, the bivector $i$ represents a 90° counter-clockwise rotation: given a vector $v$, $iv$ is that vector rotated 90°, and $iiv = v$ is the vector rotated by 180°, i.e., multiplied by $-1$, giving a completely geometric interpretation for $i^2 = -1$.

(Geometric Algebra is a very powerful mathematical tool for doing physics, and I suspect it would make learning physics easier; but the existing texts on it all assume familiarity with fairly advanced math & physics so I'm having a hard time with it.)

I had similar thoughts to Uncle Lar's posts, but my physics lessons that used complex numbers, especially for wave functions, are 40+ years out of date. I can't remember enough to give examples, and they may also hinge on that wonderful catch all in physics that when 'normalized' a small displacement angle $r$, expressed in radians approximately equals the sin($r$).

It is safest to assume a spherical cow, standing on an infinite plane of charge.

wait. Diiiiiid you just call me a COW?! mister, you are approaching my limits! (hey, I can make calculus jokes after two days of class. I think I can do this…) But no cows! Not even pretty little Jersey heifers!

You are also now in a position to appreciate the joke behind the [1995 Ig Nobel prize in Economics](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7sYuX7j0I3w):

> Awarded jointly to Nick Leeson and his superiors at Barings Bank and to Robert Citron of Orange County, California, for using the calculus of derivatives to demonstrate that every financial institution has its limits.

What you're thinking of is imaginary numbers used per their name: Given $\cos(\omega t + \phi)$, add an imaginary $\sin(\omega t + \phi)$ to get $e^{i(\omega t + \phi)}$ which is much easier to manipulate; and as long as you apply only linear operators you can take the real part of the end result to get your final answer. (Or, if you're an E.E. like myself, ignore the little detail that we'd entirely invented the imaginary component and treat all signals as if they were actually complex numbers.)

Geometric Algebra, OTOH, gives imaginary numbers—quaternions, even—concrete, visualizable, geometric meaning.

Okay, did anyone else's eyes cross reading Joel's first paragraph here? Just me?

Okay then.

In plainer English: Most electrical signals (for example, the current in household AC) vary with time approximately like a sine wave. But doing math with sine waves is absurdly hard. So electrical engineers use a trick.

In the math of complex numbers one important result is $e^{ix} = \cos x + j\sin x$. (By convention, current is represented by $i$, so E.E.s use $j$ for the imaginary number $j^2 = -1$; mathematicians usually use $i$.) And exponentials are much nicer to manipulate. If you recall the effort of memorizing the “trig identities” in high school you can go ahead and feel cheated: you can use the rules of exponents to get the same results with much less effort.
The E.E. trick works like this: if you have a current that behaves like a cosine wave (which is after all a sine wave with a different starting point—and the starting point is arbitrary) you can pretend there is an imaginary current alongside the real one. Put them together, you get the exponential function; analyze the circuit as if the current were this complex number; and when you get the result, strip off the imaginary part—which was never there to begin with.

The trick works so well that E.E.s deliberately forget that the imaginary part is their own invention, and often just treat signals as if the imaginary part was actually present.

Mary | August 25, 2015 at 11:51 am |
Remember, folks, don’t drink and derive. Know your limits.

Christopher M. Chupik | August 24, 2015 at 5:48 pm |
Don’t let the so-and-sos get you down. They are small people, trying to bring you down to their level.

Cedar Sanderson | August 24, 2015 at 5:52 pm |
I’m fine. There are personal reasons I had to get out of the line of fire, collateral damage is just not on.

emily61 | August 25, 2015 at 8:53 am |
Like your picture.

Cedar Sanderson | August 25, 2015 at 12:26 pm |
Thanks 🙌 Oleg Volk took photos of me at LibertyCon and I’ve been using them as headshots here and there. He does lovely work, I barely recognize myself.

pohjalainen | August 25, 2015 at 10:25 am |
Main reason why I stay in the closed groups in facebook, and post very mostly just non-controversial stuff, photos and so on, on my wall. I might be able to handle dealing with that other stuff in the summer, but not when I go through the winter depression.

And when it comes to dealing with depression, sticking to the positive with fiction, both with reading and with movies and television series etc. has worked pretty well for me. Stay out of the downward spiral and it stays manageable, start harping on it and reinforcing it with negative stuff and it can get out of hand, and THEN getting out of it gets, well, not easy at all. The SAD by itself is a damn nuisance, and has prevented lots of things, like studying seriously, for me, but at least it lasts only a few months, but it can work as the starting point for that downwards trend and has, and I suppose the same goes for any bouts of mild depression. DO NOT reinforce the negative if you get those, be damn sure to look for the things which make you feel better (and that does not mean things which make you feel validated if your opinion at that point happens to be that the world sucks and we are all going to hell anyway) no matter how stupid that sometimes can feel (I am not anywhere even close to Pollyanna by nature, pretty much a pessimist. And btw, that is one book I very much wanted to hurl to the wall when I was forced to read it for a school report as a child, I still think it is stupid, you rarely can change OTHERS by those methods – as we frequently can see in real life, like perhaps with this last version of SP… But you can change yourself, even if it takes time. At the very least, you can stop yourself from changing towards something worse).

pohjalainen | August 25, 2015 at 10:26 am |
Heh. How did that ‘very’ get there… editing comments on the fly is something I don’t do well.

Byron | August 24, 2015 at 12:53 pm |
So, does that mean I can get my health insurance to cover my book expenses? 😺

Byron | August 24, 2015 at 12:57 pm |
On a slightly different note, would it take a prescription for someone to get Grady Booch’s “Object Oriented Analysis and Design with Applications” for the treatment of insomnia due to its extreme soporific effect?

Vakkotaur | August 24, 2015 at 1:08 pm |
Gott im Himmel! That makes it seem like Thinking Forth might be a stimulant in comparison. Though I suspect some might claim
anything Forth related to be more of a hallucinogen. (Full Disclosure: I did Forth for a living for a decade.)

Christopher M. Chupik  |  August 24, 2015 at 5:53 pm
Has any German ever exclaimed “Gott in Himmel”? Or is that just a comic book thing?

freeholder45  |  August 24, 2015 at 6:06 pm
Doesn’t it mean “God in Heaven!”? If so, I suspect it has been used, as “God in Heaven” has been used in English. Pretty archaic now, of course, so “Gott in Himmel” probably isn’t used much in modern parlance.

Donald Campbell  |  August 24, 2015 at 8:00 pm
im is a contraction for in dem (remember in German, nouns all have gender, and they must have ‘a’ or ‘the’ to carry the gender). I think, God in the Heaven is a more literal translation; however, God in Heaven would be the idiomatic expression closest to it. Personally, I prefer, “Jesus, Mary and Joseph”. Additionally, I subscribe to the theory that ‘Gott’s name in vain’ is not the occasional swear word, but rather more akin to screaming ‘Allah Akbar’ when cutting off someone’s head or throwing a homosexual off a building. Now, screaming ‘Admiral Ackbar’ while cutting off someone’s head is perfectly acceptable, particularly if the person name rhymes with “Hattrick Payden.”

The Other Sean  |  August 25, 2015 at 12:02 am
“It’s a trap!”

TXRed  |  August 24, 2015 at 9:11 pm
Older (as in their 60s-70s-80s) German associates use it, as do some Texan-Germans. I've been known to mutter it under my breath, usually while shaking my head and then sighing. “Mein lieber Gott” is another one.

accordingtohoyt  |  August 24, 2015 at 9:57 pm
“I’ve been known to mutter it under my breath, usually while shaking my head and then sighing. “Mein lieber Gott” is another one.”
Ah, so you too got word of how the Hugo awards went, sad pre-award spectacle and all. Yeah, people kept telling me, and even though I wasn’t watching, it drove me to saying that many times.

JPDev  |  August 25, 2015 at 12:41 am
A recent and reasonable take on the Hugo mess and why it matters is at:
http://thefederalist.com/2015/08/24/the-hugo-awards-why-the-war-on-nerds-is-a-war-on-art/

TXRed  |  August 25, 2015 at 1:39 pm
Grading papers, especially college freshmen essays, can also inspire similar murmurs.
(And yes, I picked it up Sunday and link-hopped through much of the, ahem, charming and gracious behavior displayed by the anti-Puppies.
/sarc [if really needed])

wheels  |  August 25, 2015 at 7:08 pm
I thought about humorously comparing Booch’s book to Brodie’s, but my book database tells me I don’t have Booch’s. That surprises me, although it’s not necessarily correct (the database is a work in progress). I have both Starting Forth and Thinking Forth, as well as Knecht’s Introduction to FORTH and several of the Forth manuals I wrote for the Forth systems I wrote or ported.

I made my living from Forth for a bit over a decade, myself. Fun language. I wouldn’t mind having more opportunity to use it, but I've moved on to C/C++, for the most part.

David, infamous sockpuppet  |  August 24, 2015 at 3:26 pm
I've got two copies. You're welcome to both.
Considering the total pool of Forth programmers is probably smaller than the readership of this blog, finding even one other here is pretty bizarre…

My Forth books have been gathering dust for decades. I moved to Pascal.

Oliver Shank | August 25, 2015 at 1:15 pm |
Well… I still poke through FORTH books from time to time, and of the languages used, it was my favorite.

BobtheRegisteredFool | August 24, 2015 at 1:12 pm |
I have found reading helpful, but I have also found that sometimes what is going on kills my desire to read. Or the range of what I can enjoy is restricted.

Mary | August 24, 2015 at 1:19 pm |
Certainly. It’s always wise to keep handy books for reading in low spots. For instance, I keep The 13 Clocks about. Which is both delightful and a children’s book.

freeholder45 | August 24, 2015 at 6:11 pm |
I have two or three shelves full of Christian books, much of it theology. Another three shelves or so of how-to and animal care books. Some other non-fiction. Then there are three or four shelves of fiction, and that’s what I read when I’m tired or not feeling well and don’t have the mental energy to focus on the non-fiction. Most of the fiction isn’t all that great as literature (a whole shelf full of Grace Livingston Hill, for example — no matter how worthy the subject matter, nobody could say she was a really great writer); the only reason I keep it is because there are times when I need something light and easy to read that I know has a happy ending.

TXRed | August 24, 2015 at 9:13 pm |
Jan Karon was my “need soft book now!” escape for many years. Poor Father Tim, he starts of so well meaning and ends up with dogs and cats living together in the parsonage. 😊

pohjalainen | August 25, 2015 at 11:05 am |
For me it’s often military SF, or something like Ringo’s Black Tide series, anything where things first go very, very wrong but the characters pull together, kick ass and turn the tide, and by the ending either the menace has been stomped completely or is at least not a real threat anymore, and the rebuilding is starting.

What I’d love is to find a lot more something like that Ringo series, pretty much starts as horror but then does go to that asskickery stage fairly fast. The more ass kicking the better. 😊

When I want something softer I’ll usually go for cozy mysteries. I prefer the ones with a fairly strong comedy flavor, but where the threat is still believable as a threat. So lots of comedic bumbling around as the sleuth or sleuths try to figure out how to do something they are not familiar with doing, with a few genuinely scary moments here and there and perhaps a little bit believable action for the final confrontation, not just oh the killer was aunt Maggie and the cops took him, now lets have some tea.

Mary | August 25, 2015 at 11:26 am |
How serious the threat can be in the book is determined by how zonked I am in real life. Happy endings may suffice if I’m not too zonked — and I may even read adult books then.

Laurie | August 25, 2015 at 12:30 am |
I LOVE The 13 Clocks! But so few people know about it.

Mary | August 25, 2015 at 9:11 am |
It’s still in print, that’s encouraging.
Remember we can discuss books on our Goodreads group. In fact, we do so every month.

emily61 | August 24, 2015 at 2:04 pm |
Will you send a message when you start discussing Wearing the Cape? I'm subscribed but I haven't participated before. Are there any rules for the discussion?

Mary | August 24, 2015 at 2:11 pm |
There will be a spoiler-free discussion topic and a spoilers allowed one. Other than putting your spoilers in the right place, if you belong to the group, you will get a message. Also, I will post links in Sarah's blog post of the day.

richard_mcenroe (@richard_mcenroe) | August 24, 2015 at 1:29 pm |
You know what I find therapeutic? Reading books that tell me I'm a cockroach (Kafka aside).

TXRed | August 24, 2015 at 1:45 pm |
Oh, like the social history of Calvinism in my TBR pile? (Just kidding! Although there are days when Innate Depravity explains so much . . .)

Randy Wilde | August 24, 2015 at 3:03 pm |
I find rereading the various Calvin and Hobbes collections to be very therapeutic. Laughter is the best medicine, right?

Cedar Sanderson | August 24, 2015 at 3:08 pm |
Yes! And I was just looking at the collections of Calvin & Hobbes I bought for my kids this summer. No time today, but maybe tonight after classes.

Joe Wooten | August 25, 2015 at 9:20 pm |
Love those C&H cartoons. I have every one published and still laugh like crazy every time I read them, especially when he makes snowthings……

Jerry Boyd | August 25, 2015 at 11:40 am |
Therapeutic? That would be Piper, any Piper, but preferably the Fuzzy books.

RES | August 24, 2015 at 1:54 pm |
In the interest of practicing post-Hugo Bibliotherapy, I notice this news item from last week:

Going up? Space elevator could zoom astronauts into Earth's stratosphere
Canadian space firm granted US and UK patents for elevator designed to take astronauts 20km (12 miles) above Earth so they can then be propelled into space

A Canadian space firm is one step closer to revolutionizing space travel with a simple idea – instead of taking a rocket ship, why not take a giant elevator into space?

Thoth Technology Inc has been granted both US and UK patents for a space elevator designed to take astronauts up into the stratosphere, so they can then be propelled into space.

The company said the tower, named the ThothX Tower, will be an inflatable, freestanding structure complete with an electrical elevator and will reach 20km (12.5 miles) above the Earth.

“Astronauts would ascend to 20km by electrical elevator. From the top of the tower, space planes will launch in a single stage to orbit, returning to the top of the tower for refueling and refight,” Brendan Quine, the tower's inventor, said in a statement.
The elevator cars can also be powered electrically or inductively, eliminating the need to carry fuel, Quine wrote. The technology offers a way to access space through reusable hardware, and will save more than 30% of the fuel of a conventional rocket, Thoth Technology said in a July statement.

[SNIP]

An elevator to space has been a longstanding idea as an alternative to rocket ships, but has always been believed as unfeasible because no known material can support itself at such a height. Thoth’s design sidesteps this problem by building the elevator to 20km so it sits within the stratosphere rather than all the way in the geostationary orbit, where satellites fly.

The tower, pneumatically pressurized and actively guided over its base, could also be used for wind-energy generation and communications, according to Thoth Technology.

— — —

RTWT

richard mcenroe (@richard_mcenroe) | August 24, 2015 at 2:58 pm |

Unprecedented. I wonder why no one every thought of that before.

Of course, the elevator will have to be constructed of sustainable materials, solar powered, and operated by polyandrous, multiracial transgenders wearing appropriate shirts or we’ll get yelled at for writing about it.

TRX | August 24, 2015 at 3:50 pm |

I think in that particular future everyone wears stretchy one-piece bodysuits and … hang on a sec… the Voices are indicating metallic purple hair might be involved.

The problem with the Voices is DAMMIT WILL YOU SHUT UP I’M TRYING TO TALK HERE their messages are often a consensus, not WHAT WOULD YOU DO WITH ICE CREAM?! YOU’RE NOT EVEN REAL! a definite message.

Donald Campbell | August 24, 2015 at 8:05 pm |

I had lovely strawberry/vanilla soft-serve at lunch today.

gospace | August 24, 2015 at 8:14 pm |

Actually, similar ideas have been proposed. Check Robert Forward’s Future Magic and Indistinguishable from Magic. Based on what he wrote about strength of materials, I proposed on some blog or another years ago building a 10 mile high ramp with a 45° slope, calling it the Ultimate First Stage To Orbit. With even a small G acceleration up the ramp, you’re 10% of the way to LEO when you reach the top, with both a substantial vertical and horizontal velocity. And I just googled Ultimate First Stage To Orbit and sure enough, here’s the proposal: http://archive.seds.org/spaceviews/9603.html#ultimate.

From 1996.

gospace | August 24, 2015 at 8:15 pm |

Well, I figured out how to start the italics- now to figure out how to end them…

pohjalainen | August 25, 2015 at 11:10 am |

If you figure that out put an easy to understand explanation somewhere? (And then it probably will become obsolete in a few months if not a few weeks, more than half of the tutorials for WP I have been able to find online seem to be, or at least will be by the time I look at it a second time)

Mary | August 25, 2015 at 11:26 am |

Let’s see if I can get this:

&lt;stuff to italicize&gt;.

Mary | August 25, 2015 at 11:27 am |

Drat no, and I put in an error.
FlyingMike | August 25, 2015 at 11:50 am |

I've found this helpful:


Joel Salomon | August 25, 2015 at 11:35 am |

Works like this: <i>text you want italicized</i>. The format “<tagname>” is an HTML start-tag and “</tagname>” is its corresponding end-tag. WordPress allows certain tags in comments and ignores most others. Which ones? why, that's for you to discover by trial and error—and the rules vary from blog to blog, and between updates of themes. These work on ATH and MGC, at least:

- `<i>—</i>` for italicized text;
- `<em>—</em>` for emphasized text, which is italicized;
- `<b>—</b>` for bold text;
- `<strong>—</strong>` for strong emphasis (bold);
- `<u>—</u>` for underlined text;
- `<del>—</del>` for deleted, i.e., struck-through, text;
- `<a href="http://example.com">—</a>` for a link to some other website; and
- `<blockquote>` for a specially formatted (often indented and sometimes italicized) block-quote;

(How to create the examples I've shown is more complicated; search for [HTML entities] for more information than most of you want.)

We're pretty forgiving about goof-ups in coding, though it is traditional to follow up a post in which you've badly misformatted something, and which you now cannot edit, with a post proclaiming, "WordPress delenda est."

Joel Salomon | August 25, 2015 at 11:40 am |

... and, as it turns out, the underline tag does not work after all, and WordPress was overly clever with reinterpreting the example for external links. WordPress delenda est.

This might be more readable:

- `<a href="some URL here">—</a>` for a link to some other website;

snelson134 | August 25, 2015 at 3:01 pm |

This needs to go in the ATH FAQ & BBQ.

accordingtohoyt | August 25, 2015 at 4:16 pm |

TX Red? Also, on the FAQ and BBQ I need something saying that if you use a swear word in your name and/or make threats against the blog owner or commenters, you will not get approved. “I bet you won’t approve this” my sore ass.

TXRed | August 25, 2015 at 5:35 pm |

I'll try to get the file updated and sent to you by the end of this week. My schedule just got fulled up. I outsmarted myself vis a vis class prep. "sigh"

Anyone need a kingdom conquered or a spouse murdered while I'm at it?

Joel Salomon | August 25, 2015 at 5:37 pm |

TX Red can email me for the working HTML for those examples.

Also, see this line from ESR’s How to get banned from my blog:

"But I will not be more specific about the sorts of things I will or will not ban for, because I have discovered this: when I try to be open, fair, judicious, and balanced, there is a category of troll that will constantly push my limits and attempt to use my own scruples, sense of fair play, and respect for the norms of civilized debate as a weapon against me and against the health of the community around this blog. Coping with this sort of thing is a waste of my time."

Therefore, remember that this blog exists for my purposes and not anyone else’s. I reserve the right to be..."
unfair, obnoxious, arbitrary, tyrannical, and ban people at my whim. Protesting this will get you banned, because I will interpret it as yet another attempt to jerk me around by my sense of fair play.

richard mcenroe (@richard_mcenroe) | August 25, 2015 at 10:59 pm |

They approach Alinsky the same way Kevin Costner approached Nietzsche in “A Fish Called Wanda”:

KK: Apes do not read Nietzsche!
Jamie Lee Curtis: Yes they do, Otto, they just don't understand it!

RES | August 25, 2015 at 11:05 pm |

Not that it much matters, as you obviously merely experienced a data retrieval error, but that would be Kevin Kline, not Kevin Costner.

It is a common confusion; one simple way to distinguish between the two is one can act.

richard mcenroe (@richard_mcenroe) | August 26, 2015 at 11:52 pm |

To be fair, Costner tries to walk the walk. When James Cameron rushed down to the BP Gulf spill, he brought a camera crew. Costner brought barges and pumps.

TRX | August 26, 2015 at 12:29 pm |

“You can check out any time you like, but you can never leave…”

thephantom182 | August 24, 2015 at 2:11 pm |

This is very timely indeed, and neatly encapsulates my feelings regarding Literature in general, and SF in particular.

When you’re an Odd, it means among other things that you NEED to read at night to get over the day you just had, and hopefully get ready for the next one. You NEED uplifting tales of adventure and excitement, stories with larger-and-better-than-life characters, because if you don't get lifted up you're going to splatter on the curb.

Life is constantly telling you to shut up, back down, get in your square hole and don't ever come out. Reading is the place where you ether find a proper round hole, or you make one. Reading is the place where you get to go camping Outside The Box, before Monday morning comes and they slam the fucking lid on your fingers again.

Writing of course is where you burn the box with Hellfire. Then shoot the guy who's been slamming the lid with a weapon that runs on nightmares and darkness.

Cedar Sanderson | August 24, 2015 at 3:10 pm |

Some SF is scorned as ‘escapist literature’ but as I found while I was researching this article, that is actually a very good thing when it comes to bibliotherapy. Being able to imagine another world is good for the mind. Stepping away from the pain in your head that is life allows healing to happen. We need to read, as you say, uplifting tales.

Rob Crawford | August 24, 2015 at 7:18 pm |

Yep, yep, yep.

I made the mistake of trying to read a work-related book at a time when work is riding me like a rented mule. Couldn't get past the first chapter.

Picked up “Task Force Desperate” from Peter Nealen, and even though the future he projects is bleak, I finished it in a couple days. Then I picked up his "A Silver Cross and a Winchester" and it looks like I'll have it finished in 24 hours.

Mary | August 24, 2015 at 10:06 pm |

Why should a man be scorned, if, finding himself in prison, he tries to get out and go home? Or if, when he cannot do so, he thinks and talks about other topics than jailers and prison-walls? — J.R.R. Tolkien

pohjalainen | August 25, 2015 at 11:11 am |
FlyingMike | August 24, 2015 at 2:46 pm |

There are physical benefits to a wide ranging reading menu as well, though perhaps more pronounced in the era of only physical books printed on paper: When a book exceeds the readers limit of Teh Stoopids by whatever measure, the reader gains the upper body muscular and skeletal benefits of the windup and throw action.

It is important as a result for active readers to alternate the arm used to perform this wall-throwing in order to even out the resulting muscle growth and skeletal strengthening.

And in the age of ebooks, a handy substitute weight should be kept nearby to throw against a nearby wall (or out the window of a moving train, if so accommodated when rejection parameters are met) to both gain the aforementioned physical benefits and to avoid damage to ereaders.

Cedar Sanderson | August 24, 2015 at 3:11 pm |

I love the idea of a substitute weight – a scape-book, as it were

TXRed | August 24, 2015 at 5:00 pm |

Book-shaped and sized beanbag? I see a market . . .

Cedar Sanderson | August 24, 2015 at 5:40 pm |

And how big a book? Hm… As discussed above, certain books when thrown in the direction of someone, could serve other purposes.

RES | August 24, 2015 at 5:29 pm |

For a good scape book i recommend checking the remainder tables for collections of JMW Turner; now that the movie (Mr. Turner ) about him has passed through the theatres the stores are probably dumping excess product.

Donald Campbell | August 24, 2015 at 8:09 pm |

How about 'Ancillary Justice'?

David, infamous sockpuppet | August 24, 2015 at 3:32 pm |

“This is not a novel to be tossed aside lightly. It should be thrown with great force.” — Dottie Parker.

paladin3001 | August 24, 2015 at 9:27 pm |

I think this would sell well. Especially because pushing the ”delete” button just isn’t satisfying enough at times.

TRX | August 25, 2015 at 7:38 am |

All this talk of throwing,

Throw it at “what”? All of my “walls” that aren’t glass windows are bookshelves!

Sounds like some people don’t have enough bookshelvees…

pohjalainen | August 25, 2015 at 11:17 am |

What we also need is the target, a big padded panel you can, for example, lean against that bookshelf so you can throw the thing against it without damaging anything (or bothering the neighbors if you live in an apartment house like me… I’m still trying to figure where to put a knife throwing target so that the thuds wouldn’t echo disturbingly to the neighboring apartments. Especially the ones when I miss or the knife does not hit point first, which happens frequently because I have no place I could practice so much I’d learn this properly… I’d really need that target inside my apartment) (Rather therapeutic too, btw, when I can do it)

So, anybody willing to start a business? 🤖
Hey, it could be a generic target, books, knives, etc, big, wide and well padded, something to throw stuff at without problems inside!

aacid14 | August 24, 2015 at 3:02 pm |
Not only do you get mental exercise but you get strength when author preaching is so forceful that the book rockets across the room...

Cedar Sanderson | August 24, 2015 at 3:12 pm |
And dexterity – 10 points if you get it in the trash! or -10 points if you knock the wastebasket over..

aacid14 | August 24, 2015 at 3:13 pm |
Nah. Fireplace kindling...

Cedar Sanderson | August 24, 2015 at 3:20 pm |
I miss having a woodstove or fireplace. Next house!

aacid14 | August 24, 2015 at 3:26 pm |
Awesome to write next to with a good drink. Just need, a pipe for old times feel

TRX | August 25, 2015 at 7:41 am |
Check with your homeowners or renters insurance before you buy or move in. Some insurance companies go a bit nuts if there's any “source of open flame” inside the structure.

It could be one of those regional things, but our insurance company canceled our policy a few years back because we still had the standalone gas heaters that had been installed 60-odd years before. And worked just fine, thankyouverymuch.

Cedar Sanderson | August 25, 2015 at 7:53 am |
Yeah, I wouldn't want a source of an open flame in a rental, either. I've always lived in the north, wood was THE backup to have for when power failed in the winter (or in AK, where we had no power) so it's a part of everyday life for me.

pohjalainen | August 25, 2015 at 11:20 am |
I like candles, but with cats...

Jerry Boyd | August 25, 2015 at 11:36 am |
That generates a visual of waxing a cat. Yousa!

richard mcenroe (@richard_mcenroe) | August 25, 2015 at 11:00 pm |
Boy oh boy, you blow up ONE meth lab...

Arwen | August 24, 2015 at 3:25 pm |
I know when I am feeling blue, I like to reread old favorites. I know many people don't like to reread at all but to me it's like visiting an old friend.

FlyingMike | August 24, 2015 at 3:33 pm |
Up until I was in my late teens (I think I was a Junior in high school) I never reread a book. I'm not sure if my memory was that sharp or my stubbornness was that high (the latter most likely), but I do recall it took a conscious effort to forget the plot sequence for the first book I reread to try and enjoy the exercise.

Mary | August 24, 2015 at 3:43 pm |
What I love about re-reads is that you can pick up stuff.

Mind you, it does mean that it has to stand up to it. I've been unable to re-read books that, it turned out, only kept me going out of
desire to find out what happened. The book has to stand having all its suspense transformed into dramatic irony.

Though sometimes it really acquires an edge. I re-read all of *Harry Potter* recently and in *Goblet of Fire* one early incident was sharp as a knife, knowing what's going to happen.

(Under the first spoiler tag here: [http://marycatelli.livejournal.com/653721.html](http://marycatelli.livejournal.com/653721.html))

And you can appreciate other things, like LOTR's world-building, better at a slower pace; my first reading of LOTR was headlong.

**Arwen**  | August 24, 2015 at 4:00 pm |
---|---|
Yes, I get something new from Lord of the Rings every time I read it. And the first time, I read it, I didn't like it at all!

**librarygryffon**  | August 24, 2015 at 6:02 pm |
---|---|
I'm about due for a reread of LotR. My first time through iwas actually as a bedtime story when I was 6. My mother read it to me again when I was 9 and my sister 6. She read it to my sister again when she was 9, and I (of course) listened in. I didn't read it again until I got to university and found it fascinating how I remembered pretty much everything about the book, but the emphasis had changed.

**Mary**  | August 24, 2015 at 9:44 pm |
---|---|
I read it scads of times in my teens and early twenties. Recent re-read it once again.

**gospace**  | August 24, 2015 at 8:30 pm |
---|---|
My wife says that me and our dentist are the only people she knows who have read LOTR only once. That includes our kids. I have no desire to reread it. OTOH, everything I have read by Heinlein has been read at a minimum twice.

**Mary**  | August 24, 2015 at 9:50 pm |
---|---|
I have, over the past few weeks, probably done more posts in my blog about issues in Harry Potter than I did reviewing each work.

**TRX**  | August 24, 2015 at 3:55 pm |
---|---|
I never had that many books to choose from. In high school with nothing to do but sit there and warm a chair, I could could read several full-length novels each day.

**Bill S**  | August 24, 2015 at 7:16 pm |
---|---|
After the election of BHO in 2008, I told my supervisor that I would have to increase my volume of books read in order to distract me (sanity preservation) from the exploits of our new progressive/fascist/communist president. When I retired in late 2010 I had to ratchet things up a bit. Fortunately my department gave me a Kindle, I had already discovered Weber, Flint, Drake, Ringo, Evans, etc. at Baen, Toni Weisskopf passed out Lois Bujold omnibus CD's at a scifiCon in Charlotte, found a book buddy who introduced me to Cornwell's Sharpe series, AND the wife was still working. 900 books later I'm still sane (maybe).

**Bill S**  | August 24, 2015 at 9:47 pm |
---|---|
OK kids, here's my 2015 (copyright) bibliotherapy and potential 'check these out' for SP4:

- Straits of Hell by Taylor Anderson
- The Change edited by S. M. Stirling
- A Long Time Until Now by Michael Williamson
- 1636 The Cardinal Virtues by Flint & Hunt
- A Call to Arms by Weber, Zahn, Pope
- Grantville Gazette Volumes 57-62 edited by Paula Goodlett
- Hells Foundations Quiver by David Weber
- Sword of Arelion by Amanda Green
- Onward Drake edited by Mark Van Name
- Raising Caine by Charles Gannon
- Son of the Black Sword by Larry Correia
- Mission Tomorrow edited by Bryan Thomas Schmidt
Come the Revolution by Frank Chadwick
Stormfront by Robert Conroy
Writers of the Future Volume 31
Twice and Future Caesar by Rebecca Meluch
Her Brother's Keeper by Mike Kapari
The Desert and the Blade by S. M. Stirling
Forge a New Blade by Peter Grant
Ambassador 3: Changing Fate by Patty Jansen

Throw in Drake's Isles series, Cameron's Tyrant series, and the Lonesome Dove quartet, I should stay tranquilized.

**Free-range Oyster** | August 25, 2015 at 12:09 am |

*I'm still sane*

*snort* You come hang out here and expect us to believe that? 😅

**Laurie** | August 25, 2015 at 12:15 am |

Hey there, Master Oyster. Off topic question, but are you still in the editing biz?

**Free-range Oyster** | August 25, 2015 at 1:34 am |

Kind of. My last health crash left one of my favorite clients high and dry for months. I'm making progress on his book at last, but I don't feel right even giving a bid on other stuff until I've squared that away. Please do shoot me an email, and I'll let you know when I've cleared the deck, if you haven't found someone else by then.

**Laurie** | August 25, 2015 at 1:42 am |

You may find an email waiting from me already, if I sent it to the right place – are you still at The Village Wordsmith?

And my sympathies on the health crash and how much that can set you back. I understand if you don't want to take on anything yet, but I'm also willing to wait if you're interested. I like the idea of being edited by someone I know is a fellow Hun/Human Waver/SadPuppy supporter.

**Vakkotaur** | August 24, 2015 at 8:45 pm |

A few years ago I re-read an old (mid 1950s copyright) chemistry book of the 'descriptive chemistry' sort. It was not a College-text-re-aimed-at-High-School as so many modern chemistry books seem to be. It was *interesting* and gave one a feel for the subject long before the equations arrived – and when the periodic table was (finally) presented it was not "OMG, that thing" but "Oh, yeah, that makes sense." But the biggest thing I noticed in the re-read? The shear optimism in it. There are errors, sure (2,4,5-T is not a Good Idea) and admissions (a few places it reads roughly, "We used to throw this away, which was stupid because this other process can use it as feedstock"). But it was "We are doing better, and can and will do better still." The future was bright, not a horrible unrelenting descent into an unavoidable dystopian Hell.

**TRX** | August 25, 2015 at 7:50 am |

I have a fair collection of engineering, physics, and chemistry books. The ones from, say, 1920-1960 assume that you want to know stuff and maybe solve some problems with it. Besides "how it works", most of them give extensive examples of "what it is good for."

Later books dropped that part. By the 1980s, most of them were simply problem sets; apparently the "how" part was reserved for the teacher guides.

The latest ones turned everything into calculus; even things that were simple arithmetic in the early books. Because calculus, I guess. Calculus is a powerful tool, but it's not always the appropriate tool…

**Bob** | August 24, 2015 at 11:18 pm |

Good. I can claim to have been self-medicating all these years.

**Old Surfer** | August 25, 2015 at 12:32 pm |

Old Surfer | August 25, 2015 at 4:39 pm |

I should preface this with the note that the SJWs take over the country and then get what's coming – good read, good therapy!

Barbara M | August 26, 2015 at 1:54 am |

I'm catching up tonight, really enjoyed this post. Five years ago I learned I would need cancer treatment and lose several months to care, so I bought a box of 50 vintage Louis Lamour paperbacks on Ebay. Fits the description of uplifting – characters in tough spots, never ever give up. Thanks for reminding me.

TRX | August 26, 2015 at 12:37 pm |

Westerns aren't my genre, but I read some L'Amour once when I was desperate, and wound up reading probably 2/3 of his stuff eventually.

His writing is very uneven; some is excellent no matter what genre you drop it into, some you just go “whaaa?” I eventually realized that part of it was due to different markets he was aiming at; some were written for pulp Westerns, for example, and were expected to conform to the norms of the publisher.

The other thing is, L'Amour lost control of the copyrights for a lot of his work; there's an addendum in some of his "authorized editions" explaining how that happened. A lot of his earlier short stories and novellas got puffed out by hack writers and sold as new "Louis L'Amour" novels by unscrupulous publishers, causing various legal actions that went on for a long time. So if you're reading through your box and you think, "Hey, didn't I just read this under a different title a few days ago?" you probably did. There were also some cases of his stuff being ripped off and printed by fly-by-night publishers. And I thought the Old West was a rowdy place... there's a lot of stuff about writing and the publishing industry in some of his afterwords.
FIRST BOOK IN EARTH REVOLUTION SERIES

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TWEETS

- The Eyes of the Present accordingtohoyt.com/2019/03/14/the... https://t.co/e97GFyMtQh 2 hours ago

- Your Envy is Not a Super Power accordingtohoyt.com/2019/03/13/you... https://t.co/LZKEGWAuwC 1 day ago

- All in All It's just another, Another Brick in the Wall. accordingtohoyt.com/2019/03/12/all... https://t.co/pQUkW1tvMI 2 days ago

- Weaponized Criticism by S Andrew Swann accordingtohoyt.com/?p=29842 https://t.co/pF2u10rTm 3 days ago

- Vignettes by Luke, Mary Catelli and ‘Nother Mike and Sunday Book Promo accordingtohoyt.com/2019/03/10/vig... https://t.co/y9Vx8He9Y 4 days ago
Bibliotherapy. Life's too short for bad books – but with a new book published every 30 seconds, it can be hard to know where to start. That's why we set up a bibliotherapy service: to guide you to life-changing, eye-opening but often elusive works of literature, both past and present, the books that truly have the power to enchant, enrich and inspire. In a consultation with one of our bibliotherapists, you'll explore your relationship with books so far and your unique readerly identity will be sketched. Posts by Cedar Sanderson. Jan 5. 32 Comments. IDGaF. Here's why you should. I see it frequently, if not hear it outright, and although there are times the ability to not GaF is a powerful tool, there are definitely times it is a bad thing.
Bibliotherapy (also referred to as poetry therapy or therapeutic storytelling) is a creative arts therapies modality that involves storytelling or the reading of specific texts with the purpose of healing. It uses an individual’s relationship to the content of books and poetry and other written words as therapy. Bibliotherapy is often combined with writing therapy. It has been shown to be effective in the treatment of depression. A 3 year follow up study has suggested that the results are long-lasting. Join Facebook to connect with Cedar Sanderson and others you may know. Facebook gives people the power to share and makes… Cedar Sanderson is on Facebook. To connect with Cedar, sign up for Facebook today. Log In. or. Sign Up. About Cedar Sanderson. Work. Eurofins Lancaster Laboratories. That’s where bibliotherapy comes in. Practised around the world by psychologists, social workers, and counselors along with librarians, it’s become something of a buzzword in the past few years, drawing scholarly researchers and bloggers alike. Alain de Botton’s London-based School of Life even has a quartet of resident “bibliotherapists”, including Ella Berthoud and Susan Elderkin, whose book The Novel Cure: An A-Z of Literary Remedies is a thrifty alternative to the school’s £80 ($120) consultations.