

# Mary Baldwin College Alumnae/i Book Club

July 2008

What we are reading in  
2008:

May 1: *Devil in the White City* by Erik Larson

June 5: *Eat, Pray, Love* by Elizabeth Gilbert

July 3: *Daughter of Destiny: An Autobiography* by Benazir Bhutto

Aug 7: *Pillars of the Earth* by Ken Follet

Sept 4: *The Book Thief* by Markus Zusak

Oct 2: *Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil* by John Berendt

Nov 6: *The Shadow of the Wind* by Carlos Ruiz Zafon

Dec 4: *The Next Thing on My List* by Jill Smolinski

## Summer Reading!!

Summer is here and what does this mean? VACATION! Fun, sun and BOOKS! What books are you planning to read this summer? Send me the title, author, your first name, city, state and I will include it in next month's newsletter!

If you are looking for a few suggestions between now and next month here are some to get you started. (I have not read any of these books. They are books that I have come across that sound very interesting and wanted to share in case someone wanted to read them.) If you do read one of these books email me whether or not you liked it!

***The Sinner's Guide to Confession*** by Phyllis Schieber

Barbara, Kaye, and Ellen, longtime friends, are inseparable—but each nurtures her own secret. As a widowed mother, Barbara hides her persona as a writer of erotica. Kaye is having an extramarital affair that reawakens her passion but fills her with conflict. Ellen has lost her husband to a younger woman who is now pregnant—a painful blow, since Ellen and her husband were never able to conceive. But she is not childless... Ellen is still haunted by the memory of the baby girl she had at sixteen and was forced to relinquish at birth. Estranged from her family, Ellen realizes that if she is ever to find her lost daughter—now a grown woman herself—she will have to confront her shame and rely on her dearest friends.

***The Deceived*** by Brett Battles

Anonymity. Trust. Professionalism. In his world, Jonathan Quinn has a few rules. He'll get rid of bodies that have to disappear; nothing ever gets traced back to him. But when Quinn is called to a busy Los Angeles port where a shipping container has just come in from the sea, it's clear his rules have been violated. Inside the crate is a dead man—a man who once saved Quinn's life. And while no one knows how CIA agent Steven Markoff died, Quinn has to do more than clean. He has to find Markoff's girlfriend, Jenny. To tell her that Markoff is dead. To find out why—and why someone sent Markoff's body to him.

***How To Talk To A Widower*** by Jonathan Trooper

Doug Parker is a widower at age twenty-nine, and in his quiet suburban town, that makes him something of a celebrity—the object of sympathy, curiosity, and, in some cases, unbridled desire. But Doug has other things on his mind. First there's his sixteen year-old stepson, Russ: a once-sweet kid who now is getting into increasingly serious trouble on a daily basis. Then there are Doug's sisters: his bossy twin, Clair, who's just left her husband and moved in with Doug, determined to rouse him from his Grieving stupor. And Debbie, who's engaged to Doug's ex-best friend and manically determined to pull off the perfect wedding at any cost. Soon Doug's entire nuclear family is in his face. And when he starts dipping his toes into the shark-infested waters of the second-time around dating scene, it isn't long before his new life is spinning hopelessly out of control, cutting a harrowing and often hilarious swath of sexual missteps and escalating chaos across the suburban landscape.

Also: *Animal, Vegetable, Miracle* by Barbara Kingsolver

We are on the MBC website!!  
[www.mbc.edu/alumnae](http://www.mbc.edu/alumnae)

Join us online!!  
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/MBCAlumBookClub>

If you are in the Richmond, VA area we would love for you to join us! All meeting times are 7pm and last approximately 1 hour.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact Theresa Cash Lewis '99 at [pinkferrets@gmail.com](mailto:pinkferrets@gmail.com) or the Alumnae/i office at 1-800-763-7359.



## Your Guide to the Classics: *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, An American Slave*

No book except perhaps *Uncle Tom's Cabin* had as powerful an impact on the abolitionist movement as *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*. But while Stowe wrote about imaginary characters, Douglass's book is a record of his own remarkable life.

Born a slave in 1818 on a plantation in Maryland, Douglass taught himself to read and write. In 1845, seven years after escaping to the North, he published *Narrative*, the first of three autobiographies. This book calmly but dramatically recounts the horrors and the accomplishments of his early years—the daily, casual brutality of the white masters; his painful efforts to educate himself; his decision to find freedom or die; and his harrowing but successful escape.

An astonishing orator and a skillful writer, Douglass became a newspaper editor, a political activist, and an eloquent spokesperson for the civil rights of African Americans. He lived through the Civil War, the end of slavery, and the beginning of segregation. He was celebrated internationally as the leading black intellectual of his day, and his story still resonates in ours.

### About the Author:

Douglass began speaking against slavery at abolitionist meetings and soon gained a reputation as a brilliant orator. In 1841 he began working full-time as an abolitionist lecturer, touring with one of the leading activists of the day, William Lloyd Garrison.

Douglass published his first autobiography, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave*, in 1845. The book became an immediate sensation and was widely read both in America and abroad. Its publication, however, jeopardized his freedom by exposing his true identity. To avoid capture as a fugitive slave, Douglass spent the next several years touring and speaking in England and Ireland. In 1846, two friends purchased his freedom. Douglass returned to America, an internationally renowned abolitionist and orator.

Douglass addressed the first Women's Rights Convention in Seneca Falls, New York, in 1848. This began his long association with the women's rights movement, including friendships with such well-known suffragists as Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton.

On February 20, 1896, Frederick Douglass died of a heart attack. His death triggered an outpouring of grief and mourning; black schools in Washington, D.C. closed for a day, and thousands of children were taken to the Metropolitan African Methodist Episcopal Church to view his open casket.

In his third autobiography, Douglass succinctly and aptly summarized his life; writing that he had "lived several lives in one: first, the life of slavery; secondly, the life of a fugitive from slavery; thirdly, the life of comparative freedom; fourthly, the life of conflict and battle; and fifthly, the life of victory, if not complete, at least assured."

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