**19 MINUTES**

Many things can happen in 19 Minutes. As Jodi Picoult weaves the stories of Josie Cormier and Peter Houghton, the reader gets a picture of two young people who are just trying to fit in. At one point in their lives Peter and Josie were friends. Now, they are not in the same social strata. In this novel, Picoult exams the issue that plagues teenagers nationwide, bullying. What can be the result of bullying? In this picturesque small town in New Hampshire, Peter Houghton spends 19 minutes in his high school with loaded weapons. Nine students and one teacher are dead. This books tells multiple stories from different perspectives. It’s heart wrenching and terrifying in turns. It’s a fascinating book and an interesting read. I would suggest a large box of tissues. You won’t see the end coming. I sure didn’t. —Judy Howell

**A NATURAL HISTORY OF DRAGONS**

I am loving one of the newest trends in fiction, the advent of the woman scientist. I have seen several reviewed of late, and have read at least a couple myself. This one was quite the treat, a fantasy novel in a world where not only do dragons exist, but scientists go on expeditions to study them. (Of course, they do. What scientist in such a world could resist?) In this society seemingly modeled upon Victorian England, a young woman strives to join their ranks. The book is heavily illustrated with sketches supposedly drawn by the main character, which adds an extra layer of verisimilitude. I have to say that there was at least one plot twist here that I didn’t see coming. This is a fun summer read, and if it inspires future female scientists, all to the good! —Michelle Fields

**ABOUT THE NIGHT**

On a hot summer day in 1947, on a grandstand overlooking Jerusalem, Elias and Lila fall deeply, irrevocably in love. Tragically, they come from two different worlds. Elias is a Christian Arab living on the eastern side of the newly divided city, and Lila is a Jew living on the western side. What will the growing conflict between their cultures do to their relationship? About the Night is a modern day Romeo and Juliet story about the forbidden love Lila, a Jew, and Elias, a Christian Arab, living in Jerusalem from 1947-2006. The book jumps between 2006 and the past as the conflicts between their cultures show up again and again. About the Night is a beautifully woven story showing how hope, loss, and love affects each and every one of us. —Bethany Turner
**What We Are Currently Reading**

**Judy:**
- *Phantom Evil* by Heather Graham
- *The Girl in the Ice* by Robert Bryndza
- *Don’t Breathe a Word* by Jennifer McMahon
- *Who Do You Love* by Jennifer Weiner
- *The Silkworm* by Robert Galbraith

**Michelle:**
- *Cousin Bette* by Honore de Balzac
- *Evelina* by Frances Burney
- *Fingersmith* by Sarah Waters
- *The 39 Steps* by John Buchan
- *Guards Guards* by Terry Pratchett
- *The Way We Live Now* by Anthony Trollope

Would you like to make a book recommendation? We are looking for guest reviewers. If you are interested, please contact either Michelle Fields or Judy Howell by July 25. Recommendations only have to be around 100 words, so please join the fun. We enjoy hearing about new books just as much as we like telling other people about ones we’ve enjoyed!

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**BROTHERHOOD IN DEATH**

*BROTHERHOOD IN DEATH* is the latest installment of the Eve Dallas series. It’s number 42. Over the years, I have usually lost interest in a series when it goes on for years. I have not this series. In the *In Death* series, Eve Dallas’ character is changing and evolving which keeps the book fresh. This novel in particular is very fast paced and many of the characters that we have grown to adore show up. Central to this story is Dennis Mira. Mr. Mira walks in to his family home and discovers his cousin being beaten. Mr. Mira is knocked out and upon waking, calls Eve. This sad state of affairs begins to develop into a serial/spree killer plot that cannot be predicted. If you like a fast paced thriller with some psychological aspects, this book is for you. —JH

**SOUTH RIDING**

I have seen a number of reviewers comparing this novel to George Eliot’s *Middlemarch*. As Eliot’s novel is one of my all-time favorites, I thought I should give this one a try and I am so glad that I did. It does have a similar feel to *Middlemarch* in that it recounts the lives of the residents of a particular section of England of different classes and backgrounds. It is set in inter-war period, ending with the beginning of the Second World War. There is a special emphasis here on rural government and how the decisions that it makes impact the lives of the local people. It is a very absorbing read with characters that I grew immensely fond of, who made me laugh, made me cry and broke my heart a little. —MF

**LETTER FROM THE TOWER**

This is a very short book which examines the history of a letter which has been historically thought to be a fake. The ownership of this letter can be now traced for 500 years. It was burned in an accidental fire and now the scorched remnants of the letter are in the British Library. Luckily, the letter was copied and the copy is also held by the library. Sandra Vasoli traces the history of the letter and now sheds new light on it. Her assessment is that it is probably original and a letter from Anne while she was held in the tower. This is a fascinating book if you are interested in the history of Anne Boleyn and Henry VIII. —JH