

Not Your Mother's Library Transcript

Episode 10: Books We Will Never Read

(Brief intro music)

Rachel: Hi, and welcome to Not Your Mother's Library, a readers' advisory podcast from the Oak Creek Public Library. I'm Rachel, and today I am co-hostless. Cue the ever-impending loneliness that plagues all of our tiny little lives. (whispers) Melody I miss you why did you leave me? (clears throat) Fear not, though, because I do have a guest, and she is way better than the alternative of the sock puppet that I was planning to bring. Long-time listeners will know this guest as she contributed to July's episode, 'Get Happy'. It's none other than the library director herself, Jill! Welcome.

Jill: Thank you.

Rachel: And thank you for saving the show today. Would you like to give everyone a refresher about who you are and maybe some of your background?

Jill: Sure! Like Rachel said, I'm Jill Lininger. I am the Director at the...here at the Oak Creek Library. I have been the Director for eight years now. I was in the 'Get Happy' podcast—I suggested some books—and I'm excited to do this podcast again! So, thank you.

Rachel: Happy to have you here. We do have a fun show planned today—something a little bit different. We usually talk about books that we recommend, but Jill suggested that we instead talk about ones that we wouldn't be caught dead reading.

Jill: So, I have to say real quick that on the way into record the podcast I was telling another coworker about this plan, and her suggestion was that that's a great idea, because at the beginning of the year she always feels inundated with all of the things that she should be doing. So, I'm hoping that by doing this we'll be able to give you a list of things that you can just tick right off your to-do list.

Rachel: (laughs)

Jill: Because you don't have to try these! (laughs)

Rachel: We're just so helpful, you know?

Jill: Exactly.

Rachel: It's what we're here for. Now, I just want to say that as per usual, all of this is opinion-based. We may talk about a book or an author that you yourself really enjoy, and we respect that. Sure. I think every book has its own crowd of fans, right? And just because Jill or I might not like something—in fact, we may even detest it, I'd say—that doesn't mean we don't think other people should give it a try. And just because we dislike a book now doesn't mean we'll never change our minds about it...but seriously though, we're never going to read these. (laughs) Did you want to get started, Jill?

Jill: Sure. So, the first book that I have on my list is actually one that we've talked about on this podcast before. It's a book that Melody really liked.

Rachel: Which is why you can talk about it now that she's gone!

Jill: Exactly! But this one, for me, is "Girl, Wash Your Face" by Rachel Hollis, and there's nothing wrong with the book. It's a bestseller, it's very popular with a lot of people that I know and like. I personally just normally am not into self-help books. Which is funny, since the last podcast I was on I talked about a self-help book.

Rachel: (laughs)

Jill: But, overall, I don't really like those personal development self-help books unless it's a memoir; unless it talks about a person's journey and it gives you other information besides just their personal-development journey. So, again, in the last podcast I talked about the Dan Harris book where he talks about meditating but he also talks about becoming an anchor for ABC News. So, when you couch it in how that affected his life, I like that one. Whenever I read reviews of personal development books I always think of the line in the Elizabeth Gilbert book "Eat, Pray, Love." She gets an email from a friend when she is at her yogi retreat in India, and the friend says, "I wish I were interested in what you were doing." And so that's for the most part how I feel about personal development books. I love the concept, but I just don't find them to be that engaging. So, I like the idea of them, but I recognize that I'm never going to read one.

Rachel: And would you go to India to be a yogi?

Jill: No, I would not. I think about that line a lot in other parts of my life. Not just personal development. I feel that way about gardening. (laughs) I feel that way about a lot of things.

Rachel: (laughs) Sure.

Jill: The other one—again, personal development—that I always think sounds so interesting—so, if in the comments you want to tell me why it is so interesting, go for it—is "The Happiness Project" by Gretchen Rubin. I have tried to read this book at least three times, so it's time for me to just accept that it's never going to happen.

Rachel: Third time was not the charm.

Jill: And take it off of my list of things to read. (laughs)

Rachel: Sure, that's fair. (laughs) You gave it a go.

Jill: Exactly. I tried and tried and tried. (laughs)

Rachel: Well, my first book is nothing like those. (laughs) It's actually a series of books by K. A. Applegate called "The Animorphs." I don't know if you've ever seen these, Jill, but when I was a kid the covers used to freak me out. They would show kids, like, transforming into animals, but it was really—it was the '90s, so they tried but did not succeed very well. And all I can think of now is...whenever I see these covers I think of the horror movie "Tusk" which is...if you don't know about "Tusk," think "Human Centipede" but with a walrus.

Jill: (laughs) Okay.

Rachel: So, if that doesn't put you off I don't know what will!

Jill: I actually feel the same way...because before I was a library director I was a children's librarian.

Rachel: Oh, sure.

Jill: So, I'm very familiar with "The Animorphs," and I feel that way also about the "Iron Hunter" series. That's a series about cats. Warrior cats.

Rachel: Warriors, yeah.

Jill: And I feel the same way. Like, they're a huge...they're a huge hit. Kids love to read them, but the covers kind of freak me out.

Rachel: Maybe it's sort of a niche group of kids who just go crazy about animals and...wish they were animals? I don't know. It's a weird one.

Jill: Yeah, maybe.

Rachel: But 'no' for me! Another that I refuse to read is "The Host" by Stephanie Meyer. So, my reason behind this is because I fell into the "Twilight" trap, okay? It's not going to happen again! I was a teenager at the time when the books came out, so I am a target demographic, but...yeah. I could never read this one. I mean, I'm ashamed that I've read the...all the "Twilight" books. (laughs)

Jill: I don't think there's anything to be ashamed of. A lot of us have read the "Twilight" books.

Rachel: I suppose. (laughs)

Jill: I also...I actually started the "Twilight" series. I only read a little bit into the first book and decided that that was not going to be for me, because what I got most out of those books was that Edward drove a Volvo.

Rachel: (snorts)

Jill: The beginning of the book talks a lot about Edward's Volvo.

Rachel: (laughs) That is not a euphemism.

Jill: So, if you are a Volvo fan this is a great book to read. Otherwise, yeah, never going to read it.

Rachel: (laughs) I've never heard of a book recommended specifically for Volvo fans, but now they've got one.

Jill: (laughs) There you go.

Rachel: I have another...actually, another two. Both "The Da Vinci Code" by Dan Brown and "And Then There Were None" by Agatha Christie. The issue I have with this is I've seen the dramatized versions—either TV or movie—and once you understand the mystery, what is the point of reading the book? It's been spoiled, you know? So, "Da Vinci Code" is very entrenched in conspiracies, and once you kind of figure out what's going on there's no mystery around it anymore.

Jill: Yeah, "The Da Vinci Code" to me is one that you can only read once.

Rachel: Yeah, and it's also pretty long. So...mm.

Jill: But because you don't know what the mystery is—and this, again, as Rachel said at the beginning where we don't necessarily have to agree—because you don't know what the mystery is in “The Da Vinci Code,” it's a huge page-turner. But you're right: if you've seen the movie it's not going to be a page-turner because you know what's coming next.

Rachel: Yeah. I do love mysteries, so it is my own fault for not reading the books beforehand. That is on me; I will not blame anyone else. (laughs) And I might eventually give in and read “And Then There Were None” since I do like Christie's writing style. But yeah, spoilers kind of suck.

Jill: Yeah.

Rachel: Then, also there is a very long novel called “The Pillars of the Earth” by Ken Follett. I think that's how you pronounce his last name. It's about medieval history and, specifically, architecture...which I think is just a huge snore. I like history, okay? I studied it back in the day. But this particular subject does not interest me in the slightest. But, weirdly, it has spawned a TV adaption, a video game, several board games, and a musical. Why?

Jill: I didn't even know there was a musical. I knew the rest.

Rachel: I did watch the TV series, but that did kind of seal the deal on me not wanting to read the book, so...

Jill: So, I have to add one that goes along with “The Pillars of the Earth” and your comments. I'm just going to apologize right off that bat, but that's how I feel about “The Lord of the Rings” books.

Rachel: (gasps) There we are. There it is.

Jill: I like “The Lord of the Rings” books. In fact, it's one of the few that I actually like the movies better because I love the storyline...I don't want to read all of the language and I don't want to read the background—the genealogy of the characters? It just confuses me. (laughs) So, it's a great story. I don't want to read the books. (laughs)

Rachel: (laughs) He also put in a lot of songs in the book which, when you're reading a book, you can't imagine the melody. It's very off-putting for me.

Jill: No, it kind of reminds me of at the beginning of the first “Harry Potter” book where they all sing the Hogwarts school song in their own melody, because that's what you have to do.

Rachel: Uh-huh. It's fun when you're around kids and you're just making stuff up, but as a fully-grown adult trying to figure things out...it's...it's not so much fun.

Jill: Right, right. And I have read all three of them. Actually, I ended up listening to them on an audiobook, but I don't have to read them again.

Rachel: That's a good point, though. Audiobooks can help if you're questioning whether or not you want to read a book—give the audiobook a go, and it's not as intense. Yeah.

Jill: A lot of times...yeah, a lot of times I think that the audiobook makes...can...an audiobook can make or break a book. There's a lot of books that I could not get through and I loved when I listened to them. All right, my other one...my other one is anything by Janet Evanovich. Again, this has probably been on

my to-read list since I started working in libraries. So, a little more back history: my first professional job in a library was working on the bookmobile.

Rachel: Oh, cool.

Jill: And so, when you work on the bookmobile, it's all readers' advisory. And that was...Janet Evanovich was huge. She was coming out with books—I don't know—it felt like monthly. I'm sure it wasn't that often, but it felt like it was monthly. And they sound great! Every patron that's ever read one has told me they're funny, they're engaging, and there's just...there's just too many books out there to read!

Rachel: It's daunting, yeah.

Jill: And so someday I might go back to it, but again it's one of those where I should probably just take it off my...my list because it's going to be years before I ever get to that one.

Rachel: I feel similarly about author Clive Cussler. He is a very popular and prolific author, maybe not on the same level of output as James Patterson, but he's published about 80 novels which is so impressive. But they're mainly about maritime adventures and natural disaster which just is not my jam. So, no matter how good a writer he is, the subjects aren't something I'm interested in.

Jill: Yeah, there's a lot of submarines in his books, I feel like. For me, another one that I'm just never even going to pick up is "Fifty Shades of Grey" by E.L. James. Again, bestseller, it's just...it's not going to happen, and I honestly don't have anything else to add to that about why.

Rachel: I think everyone understands.

Jill: (laughs)

Rachel: So, another one that's just not going to happen for me is "It" by Stephen King. It is so darn long! It's over 1,100 pages, and I am reading King's "Dark Tower" series, which by itself has been a trial to get through, but even then the longest one is only about 850 pages.

Jill: It's just hard to hold a book that that's...that is that thick.

Rachel: Oof. Yeah! It hurts your hands, yeah. (laughs)

Jill: Again, that's where the audiobooks come in. That's where ebooks could really be a boon.

Rachel: So, you know: OverDrive, Libby, Hoopla!

Jill: Yup.

Rachel: The main issue I have with "It" though is the child-killing clown murderer who can cause hallucinations. Nope. Nope. Nope.

Jill: Yeah, I don't ever want to read horror. I don't like horror movies. I don't want to read horror books.

Rachel: Was going to say I'm also never going to watch the new series of movies from "It." I saw the original made-for-TV miniseries, which is bearable because it was in the '90s and pretty corny—and Tim Curry is a treasure, let's admit it—but I saw a clip from "It: Chapter 2" and—again—nope. Not happening.

Jill: So, the last one that I have is one that I think I can speak for all librarians when I say we get asked this a lot. Whenever I meet new people or when people find out that I'm a librarian they immediately want to know what classic literature I'm currently reading. And I'm not.

Rachel and Jill: (laughs)

Jill: I am not reading classic literature. I read it in high school, I read it in college—I'm kind of done. You know, again, someday I'll probably have to read it again because my children will have to read it and I can...we'll read it together, but..."Jane Eyre," Charles Dickens, Shakespeare: when I read them for school they were great, but I want to spend my time—my free time—when I do read...frankly, I really like fluff.

Rachel: (laughs) There you go.

Jill: And so it's just not going to happen. If you meet me, just know that if you want to talk about the great...the classic that you just read, I probably have not read it and don't know anything about it. (laughs)

Rachel: Hot tip for all of our library patrons.

Jill: It's our librarian secret that we...we probably didn't do that.

Rachel: (laughs) We, in fact, have not read every book available in the library.

Jill: Correct.

Rachel: (quietly) Such a surprise.

Jill: (laughs)

Rachel: I think that is a good place to end it. So, you guys, if you want to check out the show notes for titles and links to everything we've talked about today feel free, although I personally do not know why you would bother this time around.

Jill: Unless you want to put it on your to-do list and then mark it off, which is something that they tell you that you should do to feel like you're being more productive.

Rachel: Yeah! There you go. Does that work?

Jill: I don't know. I've never tried.

Rachel: (laughs) Remember to subscribe and rate the prod...podcast if you like what you hear. You can reach out to us through the library's website or Facebook page. Be sure to use the #notyourmotherslibrary. Thank you so much for joining me, Jill. I really was not joking about the possibility of a sock puppet co-host. I mean, the show must go on.

Jill: Well, I was really happy to be here, so...

Rachel: I will be back next month, and luckily for all of us another guest is lined up. We will be talking about musicals. Also, I have some exciting news for a future episode. You may know that April is National Poetry Month, and this is me officially sending out an all-call for your poetry! Send in your submissions to us via Facebook Messenger, and we will read them on the podcast in April. Poems can be serious or, preferably, not so serious. You can choose to have them read anonymously or, if you're

feeling brave, attach your name so that the world might bask in your infinite talent. Just let us know your preference at time of submission. Poems are due by March 1st so that we'll have time to record everything. I will be adding some of my own atrocious creations to the pot—mainly from my (strained voice) teenage years—as will other members of staff. What about you, Jill?

Jill: I think I'm going to pass on that one. Again...

Rachel: What a surprise!

Jill: Poetry: not my thing. But I'm looking forward to hearing everyone else's submissions.

Rachel: No. (clears throat) I'm sure everyone else is, too. Again, any poems submitted to us via Facebook Messenger have the chance to be read by yours truly. Deadline is March 1st! Don't plagiarize, and do try to keep it PG-rated. We reserve the right to not read your poem. If you submit your work, you are granting us permission to read, record, and post it online. Ugh. I hate disclaimers. (laughs) Until next time, happy reading.

Jill and Rachel: Bye!

(Brief outro music)

Blooper:

(Windows log-off alert)

Rachel: Oh dear.

(typing followed by Windows sign-in alert)

Rachel: (pauses then shouts) It's still recording!

Jill and Rachel: (laughs)