Register Your Book Club
The monthly newsletter

Author Visit: Susan Henderson

Long Island Author Susan Henderson visited the library last week to discuss her debut novel *Up From the Blue*. I would highly recommend this title as a book discussion read. Upon its release, *Up From the Blue* received starred reviews from *Publishers Weekly,* as well as praise from both *Library Journal,* calling it “a triumphant debut” and *Booklist,* noting Ms. Henderson’s “remarkable compassion.”

Tillie Harris goes into early labor while unpacking boxes in her new home. Her husband is overseas and Tillie has no one to turn to; no one except the estranged father she has spent years distancing herself from. Tillie did not have an easy childhood. She blamed her father for the hardships her mother endured. Tillie’s mother, Mara, suffered from mental illness and caused a great deal of chaos in the family’s home. Tillie’s father craved a normal, orderly life with his wife and family, something Mara was unable to provide. Tillie learns one of life’s hardest lessons at a very early age, but will she learn to forgive?

To see more information about the book, discussion questions and author information, please visit the author’s website: [http://www.litpark.com/](http://www.litpark.com/)

Ms. Henderson is also willing to attend your local book club meeting or call in, schedule permitting. She can be contacted through her website.

-Jackie Ranaldo, Head of Readers’ Services

Spotlight on Book Club Resources:

**Title Swap with Librarians**

What should your book club read next? In “Spotlight on Book Club Resources” we talk about different ways that your club can discover books to discuss.

“Title Swap with Librarians” is a program that takes place at the Syosset Public Library four times a year. Patrons sit down with the Readers’ Services librarians and talk about books that they have enjoyed reading. These meetings take place in front of the fireplace on the second floor and there’s always coffee and tea as well as some sweets to enjoy while chatting!

After the meeting an annotated list of the books discussed is generated and made available at different locations around the library. These lists are a great source of book club reads. Next time you are in the library, pick up the latest Title Swap list. Previous lists are always available too, just ask any Readers’ Services librarian. Or you can access the full archive online in the “What Should I Read Next?” section of our website.

There will be a special “Beach Reads Evening Title Swap” on July 11, 2012 at 7PM. The next regular title swap will occur on September 4, 2012. Hope to see you there! Sonia Grgas, Readers’ Services Librarian
“...our eyes kept looking at that 11 by 11 foot space and trying to imagine existing in that small space for the last seven years with no connection to the outside world.”

New to Book Club in a Bag

Readers’ Services has added Room by Emma Donoghue and The Lost Wife by Alyson Richman to our vast collection of Book Club in a Bag. Room, as discussed above, leads to a very interesting discussion for your book group.

The Lost Wife is written by a Long Island author whom we had the pleasure of meeting at the Syosset Library back in February. In pre-war Prague, the dreams of two young lovers are shattered when they are separated by the Nazi invasion. Then, decades later, thousands of miles away in New York, there’s an inescapable glance of recognition between two strangers. From the glamorous ease of life in Prague before the Occupation, to the horrors of Nazi Europe, The Lost Wife explores the power of first love, the resilience of the human spirit— and the strength of memory.

Please contact Readers’ Services, 921-7161, ext 241 to reserve these books for your Book Club.

-Evelyn Hershkowitz, Readers’ Services Librarian

Lisa Jones, Readers’ Services Librarian

When I get a little money, I buy books. If any is left, I buy food and clothes.

Erasmus

MAY 2012 BOOK DISCUSSION: “ROOM” by EMMA DONOGHUE

Last month, I served as moderator for our May book discussion of Room by Emma Donoghue. Room is home to 5 year old Jack but to his "Ma" Room represents an 11 by 11 foot prison where she has been held captive for the past 7 years at the hands of her abductor. Narrated by Jack, Room explores the intense bond between mother and child and the confines of their physical world. Room was short listed for the 2010 Man Book Prize and was one of the New York Times top 10 books of 2010.

To capture the horrific conditions that Jack and Ma endured, I outlined an 11 by 11 foot square on the floor in the center of the discussion group with masking tape. As our group of 31 discussed the book, our eyes kept looking at that 11 by 11 foot space and trying to imagine existing in that small space for the last seven years with no connection to the outside world. It was an effective tool that enhanced the discussion. Most participants liked the book, even with its difficult subject matter. A few people found the author's use of 5 year old Jack as narrator to be a poor choice but most found Jack's narration added to the book's dynamic. The group also touched upon such topics as child abduction, motherhood, the human condition, resilience, isolation, faith, hope and bravery just to name a few. Everyone agreed that the author paid close attention to detail in capturing the element of setting. We also discussed such infamous child abduction cases as Etan Patz and Jaycee Lee Dugard. A few members of the group, myself included, had read Jaycee Lee Dugard's memoir A Stolen Life and we briefly discussed a few topics in this book as well. I finished up the discussion by asking the group what they would miss most about the outside world if they were to find themselves in a situation similar to Jack and Ma. The majority of the group said they would miss having contact with family and friends, while others said they would miss the chance to breathe fresh air and see the seasons change.

Room is an emotionally charged book. The grim subject matter stays with you long after you have finished reading it. As was evidenced from our discussion group, there were many topics to discuss. If you are thinking about Room as a book choice for your book group or just want to have some additional information about the book, visit www.roomthebook.com. This is an interactive website for the book which has the floor plan of Room as the author envisioned it.

-Evelyn Hershkowitz, Readers’ Services Librarian