

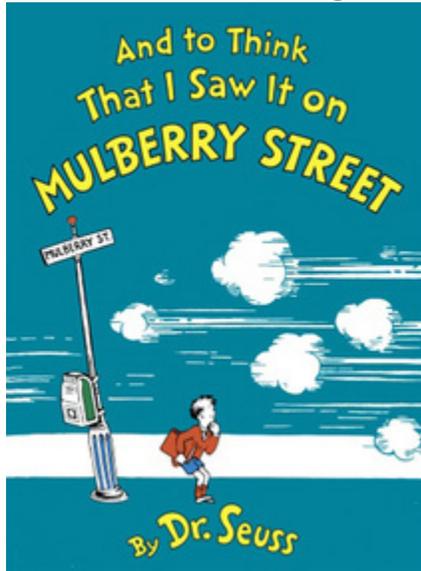
Reader Publishing Group

Let There Be Books

Book Worms of the World: This One's For You

By George and Carmela Cunningham

We have always loved books. From the time we were old enough to chew on the covers of the “Little Engine that Could” and “And to Think that I Saw It on Mulberry Street,” books have been an important part of our lives. They entertained us, they educated us, and they enlightened us. They opened the world to us and expanded our horizons.



There is nothing quite like books. We love movies and even some television, but those are team efforts. There are producers, directors, actors, cameramen, writers, grips, and set designers, each with their own private vision and idea of the project on which they are working. What emerges is the result of collaboration and compromise and sometimes a clash of wills.

A book is the author sitting by your side, telling you his story or his perception of the world. Ernest Hemingway did not consult a focus group when he wrote “To Have and Have Not.” Margaret Mitchell wasn’t concerned with market demographics when she wrote “Gone with the Wind.” And Rachel Carson wasn’t worried about whose toes she stepped on when she wrote “Silent Spring.”

We are not saying that an author is not concerned with the commercial appeal of his or her work or who may or may not be offended. What we are saying is that a book – most books at least – are the work of an individual, not a committee.

A book is more of a personal thing than a movie or a TV show. A more intimate thing. An editor may help out, he may make the final product better, but in the end a book is the author sharing his tale with you. He paints you a picture; you fill in the details. The protagonist is short and fat or tall and thin, but it’s your imagination that takes it beyond his words. You hear his voice, you picture his hesitation when he kisses the girl for the first time, and you conjure up the sound of her laughter and the tilt of her head.

And since books are so personal, they elicit some of the same reactions that people do. They make us laugh, they make us sad, and sometimes they make us angry. We spend our money to uncover their secrets, and invest our time reading what they offer. Mostly it’s worth it, sometimes it’s not.

We remember one person, too stubborn to quit, throwing Tree of Smoke across the room after spending hours wading through all 624 pages of what had to be one of the

most self-indulgent, boring accounts of the Vietnam War ever written. He then turned to his wife and asked: “Do you want to read it next?”

The book, by the way, drew mostly rave reviews by the critics.

It doesn't matter. Your reaction to a book is very personal. Someone might be the most popular kid in school, but if you don't like him, you don't like him.

If you haven't guessed by now, we like books – even if every once in a while, there is a stinker. And we like the people who read books.

Our new venture, Reader Publishing Group, is a celebration of books and the people who read books.

Mostly books on paper. Books you can carry around with you. Books with black ink on white pages. Books that you can drop and not be afraid they are going to break. But we like digital books too. We don't go on vacation any more without our Kindle. If we are stuck late at night in the middle of West Texas and the only book store around is the wire rack at the local Walgreens, we can pick a book from a list of several hundred thousand and download it within a minute.

But whether you read it on paper, listen to it in your car, or use some digital reading device – if you read books, you are our kind of people. Welcome to Reader Publishing Group. We hope you stick around and join us on our adventure.

You can follow George Cunningham on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/#!/TCReport> or be his friend on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/#!/profile.php?id=747454750>

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