

Reading for all ages



Two things I did a lot of in my youth was move and read.

Mom was always in search of a “nicer place” and that ultimately meant we would pack up and move to a different location (all within a 25-mile radius in South Florida). My memory may be a bit fuzzy after 50 years, but I think we moved around six times before I left for college.

During that highly mobile period, I developed an ever-increasing appetite for books. By the time I hit my teens, I was member to at least a couple of book clubs (you might not even know what those are), one for hardcovers and one for paperbacks.

After returning from college and staying with my Mom and sister for about a year or so (in yet another different location), I got my own place and vowed never to move. Alas, it was a rental and, though I lasted 11 years, I still had to go.

Fortunately, the next step was to lay down serious roots and thus the house I am just about to celebrate my 20th anniversary in is where I currently (and likely forever) reside.

Living single and alone (not necessarily synonymous), gives me great freedom with space around the house. While smallish (1200 sq. ft.), it is still 3 bedrooms and thus ample closet

and floor space.

Which is an important consideration, since during the time when I was working my way up the salary ladder, I continued to feed my reading habit.

It's fortunate, then, that a reading habit is not similar to food or drugs, because I bought books faster than I could read them.

Gone were those leisurely days of my youth where I could easily move from one book to another without concern for anything other than cleaning my room and taking out the trash. Now, I not only had those same responsibilities, but also had long hours (in retail, at first and then simply from a desire to overachieve).

And therefore did my reading begin to pile up. Or back up.

Without worries for space, I continued to build a wonderful library of *unread* books. Real books, not the hundreds you can electronically "stack" in your e-readers.

Over the last several years, I returned to those "old days" of only needing to take out the garbage and clean (the whole house, now, but still not as bad as Corporate America). I am now free to read at leisure, though I am left somewhat in a quandary for the choices.

Recently, I joined a review group on Facebook. Many talented writers share their works with members in hopes of receiving honest reviews. These books are exclusively in e-format and thus face a deficit for me as I still find tablet reading less comfortable than real honest-to-goodness, hold-in-your-hands books.

And I have so many of those physical ones. So many from purchases over the past decades.

I recently started reading an oldie but goodie that I read 40

years ago (“The Mote in God’s Eye”). I remember enjoying it greatly, though as yet I have not had the evocative “I remember that” feeling while rereading it.

I’m reading the book again in order to read for the first time the sequel the writers produced many years later. Though I acknowledge many sequels don’t hold up to the original, especially a solid piece of work as this, I own the hardcover and it has gone unread for many decades itself.

There’s an added benefit to reading the book again, now, 40 years later. My perspective as a 15-year old reader and that of my current 55-year old self will likely provide interesting contrast to my earlier opinion. In fact, I wonder even if I will still like the book (or as much).

No matter what age, I’ve always enjoyed reading. Now, if I can just get through all these unread hardcovers and paperbacks, perhaps I can join the modern age and start reading all those books “piled up” in my Kindle!