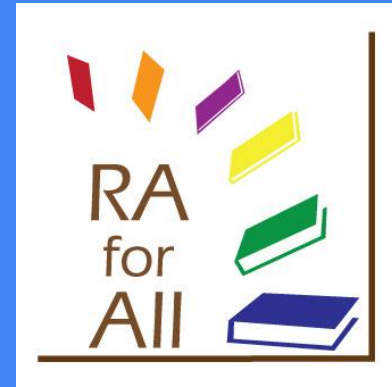


RA for All: Flip the Script and Think Like a Reader

Presented by: Becky Spratford
For: Wisconsin Valley Library Service
April 29, 2021
bspratford@hotmail.com
<http://raforall.blogspot.com>



Why RA for All?



Becky Spratford

@RAforAll

Books are our brand. But books are not our business. READING is our business.
[#librarylife](#) [#duncansmith](#) [#readadv](#)

12:55 PM - 12 May 2015



Kathe Koja

@KatheKoja

Remember, books are the words. The delivery system may vary.

10:36 AM · Apr 23, 2021 · Twitter Web App



Becky Spratford

@RAforAll

2020 could be my year of I told you so to all the library ppl who told me 5 years ago that no one wants [#ReadAdv](#) training, that libraries were repositioning as a "third space," focusing on our buildings, that we were "more than books," that no one would want or need my training

2:39 PM · Jul 8, 2020 · Twitter Web App



Becky Spratford

@RAforAll

Replying to [@RAforAll](#)

I could do that, but I am too busy trying to fill all the requests for [#ReadAdv](#) training you all need right now.

2:39 PM · Jul 8, 2020 · Twitter Web App



Flip Your Focus and Think Like a Reader

- Recapture your love of books as a reader
- Focus on the appeal of books and booktalking in general NOT on matching books with readers
- Working together to lighten the load for all
- RA as team building
- Help more readers
- Focus On Conversations **NOT** Transactions

Becky's 10 Rules for Basic RA Service

- All rules with links are always [here](#)
- Also at that link-- the 5 resources you cannot live without
- The focus here is on RA Service by **ALL**
-with lessons learned from 2020

Rule #1

Betty Rosenberg: “Never apologize for your reading tastes.”

- A non-judgmental list of what you “should read”
- Set a better example of the first rule of RA

Rule #2

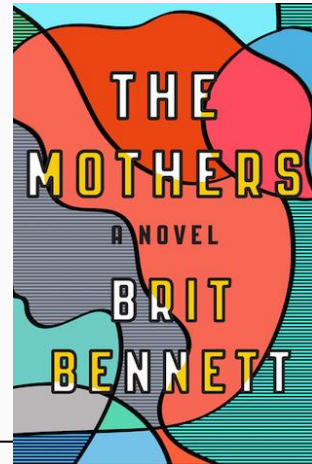
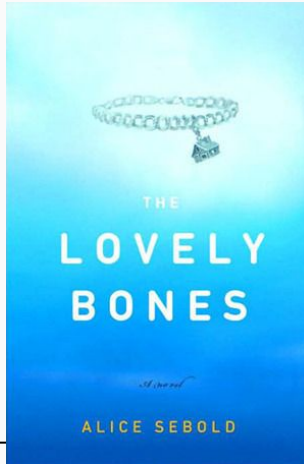
Suggest don't Recommend

- Library anxiety is real
- This means you can talk about anything!

Rule #3

Everyone reads a different version of the same book

- Poll
- Example
- Readalike

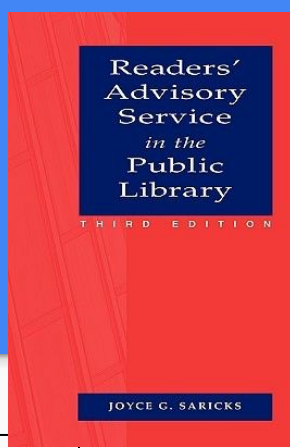


Rule #4

Write down **adjectives** about what you read;
plot you can find

- Why you like the book NOT what happens
- Appeal categories: pacing, characterization, story line, frame, tone/mood, style

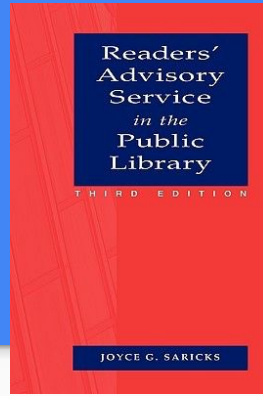
Virtual Exercise: Analyze the Appeal of Your Book



- Appeal areas on the handout [quickly on screen]
- Write down the ADJECTIVES that describe your book
- Star the areas where you are the most active
 - Becky's 3 words for Severance by Ling Ma
 - Satire, shifting time frame, character centered
- Practice sharing the appeal of your book



Pacing

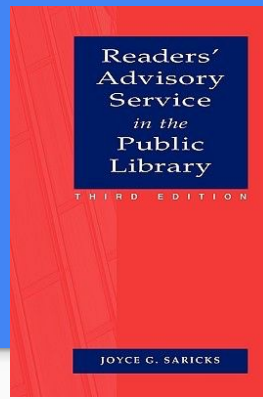


breakneck, compelling, deliberate, densely written, easy, engrossing, fast paced, leisurely paced, measured, relaxed, stately, unhurried



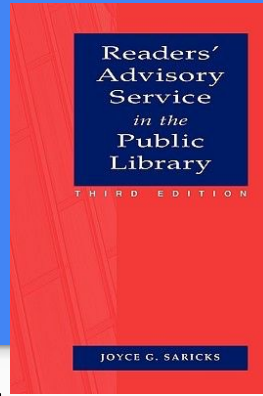
Characterization

detailed, distant, dramatic, eccentric, evocative, faithful, familiar, intriguing secondary (characters), introspective, lifelike, multiple points of view, quirky, realistic, recognizable, **series (characters)**, vivid, well developed, well drawn



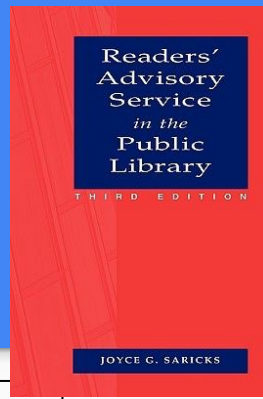
Story Line

action oriented, character centered, complex, domestic, episodic, explicit violence, family centered, folksy, gentle, inspirational, issue oriented, layered, literary references, multiple plotlines, mystical, mythic, open-ended, plot centered, plot twists, racy, resolved ending, rich and famous, romp, sexually explicit, steamy, strong language, thought-provoking, tragic

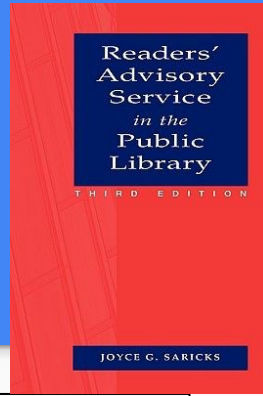


Frame and Tone

bittersweet, bleak, contemporary, darker (tone), detailed setting, details of [insert an area of specialized knowledge or skill], edgy, evocative, exotic, foreboding, gritty, hard edged, heartwarming, historical details, humorous, lush, magical, melodramatic, menacing, mystical, nightmare (tone), nostalgic, philosophical, political, psychological, romantic, rural, sensual, small town, stark, suspenseful, timeless, upbeat, urban



Style



austere, candid, classic, colorful, complex, concise, conversational, direct, dramatic, elaborate, elegant, extravagant, flamboyant, frank, graceful, homespun, jargon, metaphorical, natural, ornate, poetic, polished, prosaic, restrained, seemly, showy, simple, sophisticated, stark, thoughtful, unaffected, unembellished, unpretentious, unusual

Rule #5

Read widely (at least speed read widely)

- reading ABOUT books is just as important as reading the book
- At work exercise: speed reading for appeal handout plus example on next 2 slides
- make sure you are reading with an equity, diversity, and inclusion lens as well as a diversity of genres

Speed Reading: Professional POV

1 of 2 < > Result List Refine Search



Popularity: ★★☆☆☆

Severance (Aug 2018)

Author: Ma, Ling, 1983-

Adult **Fiction**

Description:

A survivor of an apocalyptic plague maintains a blog about a decimated Manhattan before joining a motley group of survivors to search for a place to rebuild, a goal that is complicated by an unscrupulous group leader.

Book Appeal Terms: [Definition of Appeal Terms](#)

Genre: Apocalyptic fiction; Satirical fiction

Themes: Pandemic apocalypse

Character: Complex; Culturally diverse

Storyline: Character-driven; Own voices

Tone: Reflective; Sardonic

Writing Style: Stylistically complex; Witty

Persistent link to this record (Permalink):

<http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=neh&tg=UI&an=10685192&site=novp-live>

[Check availability at Berwyn Public Library](#)

Reviews

More About This Book

Lists & Articles

Booklist:

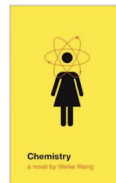
/* Starred Review */ With apocalyptic fiction having become so popular a genre, how does one approach it with originality, avoiding the too-familiar reference points? Embracing the genre but somehow transcending it, Ma creates a truly engrossing and believable anti-utopian world. Ma's cause for civilization's collapse is a pandemic. Shen Fever spreads through fungal spores, causing its victims to lethargically repeat menial tasks, ignoring all external stimuli, including the need for sustenance. Prognosis is terminal. Candace Chen, a rare survivor of the outbreak, blogs anonymously as NY Ghost on a slowly disintegrating internet, capturing the horror of what has happened in her photographs of an empty New York City, where she lived when "the fevered" started dying. The narrative flashes back to Candace's life before the end, working for a book-manufacturing company in the Bibles department; spending free time watching movies with her on-and-off boyfriend, Jonathan; and longing for the seemingly fulfilled lives of other millennials her age. Candace's story also crosses that of a group led by a former IT specialist named Bob, who seems to be suffering from a messiah complex. Ma's extraordinary debut marks a notable creative jump by playing on the apocalyptic fears many people share today, as we live in these very interesting times. Pair *Severance* with Adam Sternbergh's similarly disturbing *Shovel Ready* (2014). -- Ruzicka, Michael (Reviewed 6/1/2018) (Booklist, vol 114, number 19, p36)

Publishers Weekly:

In this shrewd postapocalyptic debut, Ma imagines the end times in the world of late capitalism, marked by comforting, debilitating effects of nostalgia on its characters. The world has succumbed to Shen Fever, a "disease of remembering" that renders its victims zombie-like, doomed to "old routines and gestures they must have inhabited for years." The affected aren't dangerous, just disturbingly similar to the living in their slavish devotion to habit. The narrator, Candace Chen, works at a specialty Manhattan book publisher, overseeing the printing of specialty Bibles, "the purest form of product packaging, the same content repackaged a million times over." Most of the production takes place in China, the source of the fever and Candace's birthplace. She narrates the swift spread of the fungal infection, which begins to ravage the city as she struggles, like many young New Yorkers, with whether she should pursue her artistic passion (photography) or commit to her corporate job. The novel alternates between Candace's vivid descriptions of increasingly plague-ridden, deserted New York and her eventual pilgrimage to an Illinois shopping mall with a band of survivors, whose leader is a menacing former IT specialist. There are some suspense elements, but the novel's strength lies in Ma's accomplished handling of the walking dead conceit to reflect on what constitutes the good life. This is a clever and dextrous debut. (Aug.) --Staff (Reviewed 06/04/2018) (Publishers Weekly, vol 265, issue 23, p)

Read-alikes

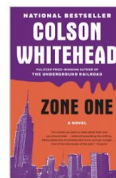
[View All](#)



Chemistry
Wang, Weike



Station Eleven
Mandel, Emily St.
John, 1973-



Zone one
Whitehead, Colson,
1969-



Speed Reading: Reader POV

Other editions

Enlarge

Read

Preview

Rating details

5 ★

24% (1635)

4 ★

45% (3037)

3 ★

23% (1540)

2 ★

5% (334)

1 ★

1% (81)

94% of people liked it

All editions: 3.88 average rating, 6627 ratings, 1155 reviews, added by 40476 people, 31141 to-reads

This edition: 3.87 average rating, 5804 ratings, 1055 reviews, added by 38621 people

Kindle Store \$13.77

Amazon

Stores

Libraries

Hardcover, 304 pages

Published August 14th 2018 by Farrar, Straus and Giroux

Original Title

Severance

ISBN

0374261598 (ISBN13: 9780374261597)

Edition Language

English

Literary Awards

Kirkus Prize for Fiction (2018), Goodreads Choice Award Nominee for Science Fiction (2018), Aspen Words Literary Prize Nominee for Longlist (2019)

Other Editions

SEVERANCE

SEVERANCE

SEVERANCE

SEVERANCE

All Editions | Add a New Edition | Combine

...Less Detail

edit details

MY ACTIVITY

Edit

Review of

ISBN 9780374261597

Rating

★★★★★

Shelves

read edit

Format

Hardcover edit

Status

January 14, 2019 – Finished Reading

3 Show more

Review

Three Words That Describe This Book: satire, shifting time frame,

Share

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Recommend It | Stats | Recent Status Updates

READERS ALSO ENJOYED

Scribe

AN EXCESS MALE

ROSEWATER

GENRES

Fiction

406 users

Science Fiction

172 users

Science Fiction > Dystopia

115 users

Apocalyptic > Post Apocalyptic

58 users

Literary Fiction

39 users

Speculative Fiction

31 users

Contemporary

30 users

Science Fiction > Apocalyptic


28 users

Adult Fiction

27 users

Adult

27 users



RA
for
All

Time-Out Taken: Post Covid Realities

- 1-5 are guiding principles; 6-10 are delivering the service
 - 6-10 are where change is most noticeable
 - The good, the bad, the here to stay
- Biggest cultural shift-- no more “stop with the books, we are important as a space.”
- RA in HUGE demand, but are you ready to step up.
 - Stock your RA Pantry

Rule #6

Share what you read- with staff and patrons.

- RA Service is about CONVERSATIONS not transactions
 - RA is 60% Listening
- Curbside and Discovery [Passive RA]
- Use the words of others
- Step-by-step guide to improve staff booktalking skills

Rule #7

Use resources

- Think of your job as “leisure reading reference.”
- Ask your patrons how they find book suggestions
- Using awards lists as a RA tool
- Becky’s favorite genre specific resources

Rule #8

Working together is your MOST valuable resource

- Goodreads is easiest
- “Stock Your RA Pantry”
 - Working together while socially distant



Rule #9

Bridge the physical-virtual divide

- Opposite sides of the same coin
- Unboxing Videos
- Interactive displays
- Use props
 - Grab an item in person or post it online and share why you picked it
- We were forced to & it is working

Rule #10

PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE

- Get Booked podcast as a practice tool
- Participate in #AskALibrarian
- Reader profile exercise
 - double sided pdf also available to download

Reader Profile Side 1

Staff Reader Profile

NAME:

This is a short survey about your own personal leisure reading habits. There are no correct answers. Have fun!

Tell me about 3 of your favorite books and why you like them. These can be current favorites, all time favorites, or just books you remember really liking:

Ex: *Pachinko* by Min Jin Lee: I love how it is a family saga, sweeping novel of the 20th century with tons of well drawn characters, and a frame I knew nothing about [Korean immigrants to Japan]

Tell me about 3 of your LEAST favorite books and why you did NOT enjoy them. These can include books you stopped reading before finishing:

Ex: *Outlander* by Diana Gabaldon: Although I normally like historical fiction and time travel stories, there was way too much romance here for my taste



Reader Profile Side 2

Please circle your top 5 favorite reading areas:

Nonfiction	Young Adult	Fantasy	Historical Fiction
Western	Literary Fiction	Mystery	Psychological Suspense
Science Fiction	Suspense	Thriller	Adventure
Romantic Suspense	Relationship Fiction	Romance	Horror
Bestsellers	Other:		

Please mark all of the formats you enjoy reading:

Hardcover	Large Type	Paperback	Audiobooks
eBooks	Graphic Novels	Other:	


Please let me know the types of books you enjoy the LEAST:

What are your favorite resources to use when looking for a good read for yourself:



Covid Success Case Study:

Des Moines Public Library [Goodreads]



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[Read & Watch](#)[Attend](#)[Explore](#)[Research](#)[Connect](#)

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MEET THE BOOK CHAT TEAM

Borrow a Book Bundle

Are you looking for a pile of books and want to leave it up to our Book Chat staff to select the titles for you? We now offer Book Bundles at all library locations. Children's Bundles include 10 board books, picture books, or reader books. Adults can get five books in their preferred genre or collection. All you have to do is call us at **(515) 248-6286** between 10 AM and 5 PM Monday through Friday, or fill out this form. We'll have your Book Bundle ready to be picked up within one business days!

Fill out the form to get your Book Bundle [HERE!](#)


Fill Out This Form!

Click [HERE](#) and answer a few questions about yourself, your reading habits, and more, and we'll reach out in 3-5 business days with some book suggestions. (We can also place books on hold for you to be picked up.)

FILL OUT THE FORM!

Call Us Now!

Our Book Chat hotline is now live! Call **(515) 248-6286** between 10 AM and 5 PM Monday through Friday and we'll ask you some questions then start putting together a list of suggested books just for you (turnaround times: 3-5 business days). We'll even put them on hold for you to pick up either during **DMPL Express** hours or during **curbside pickup** at any of our locations.





Questions: Now or Later

- Don't forget to check out my 5 Resources You Cannot Live Without
- Read, Reflect, Record, Share, Repeat...

RA for All

Matching Readers With Books
Through Your Local Public Library

Becky Siegel Spratford

Readers' Advisor, MLIS

bspratford@hotmail.com

<http://raforall.blogspot.com>

@RAforAll

708.250.6698

