

Joseph Conrad

Born Josef Korzeniowski in southern Poland in 1857, Joseph Conrad died at Kent, England in 1924. After a dismal youth, Conrad joined the French merchant marine in the Mediterranean, then crewed aboard an English trader. Eight years later he received his British Master Mariner's certificate, and enjoyed a full career at sea before he turned to writing.

Conrad's tales often employ an intricate style, and have a subtle, powerful quality. But reading them can be a bit like studying an Eastern philosophy. They often occur in an exotic location and feature vague gestures, subtle illusions, and other inscrutables. Normally his protagonists suffer from some deep inner conflict that leads to the story's denouement. In *The Secret Sharer*, for instance, the young captain of a merchant ship encounters a murderer in his cabin. The stow-away returns to the sea as enigmatically as he arrived, but not before charging the tale with heightened psychological interest.

His protagonists usually possess simple virtues. In *Heart of Darkness* – Conrad's most brilliant work – Charles Marlow (who appears in several of Conrad's novels) tells a group of his cronies how he once commanded a steamer that journeyed up the Congo to fetch the German trader, Kurtz. As he travels upriver deeper into the dark continent, Marlow senses the corrupting influence of his surrounding environment. Eventually Marlow finds the highly nervous Kurtz who's fearful of his neighboring rivals. But to the locals, Kurtz has become a god – and the recipient of unspeakable rites. In the story's finale, a deranged and depraved Kurtz dies aboard Marlow's vessel as it returns downriver.

In *Lord Jim* Conrad creates a thematic complexity that keeps the story from being just another exotic tale. Sensitive and wholesome Jim (his surname isn't revealed) is a young merchant marine officer who reluctantly abandons his ship (the *Padna*) and its passengers during what he believes is a fatal storm. When he discovers they've all survived, he decides to begin a new life. His past catches up with him, however, after he's become 'Lord Jim' in a remote Malay community. A gang of desperadoes – who've somehow learned of his background – claim his help. Jim responds with a reluctant chivalry that eventually proves his downfall.

Essay by Bill Lounsbury

2014 Winter Reading Books (continued)

more Recommendations from Your Friends

One Summer: America, 1927 (2013) by Bill Bryson

No Higher Honor: A Memoir of My Years in Washington (2011) by Condoleezza Rice

David Baldacci's *King and Maxwell Series* – start with *Split Second* (2003)

Saturday, April 12th Rowing into the Son ...

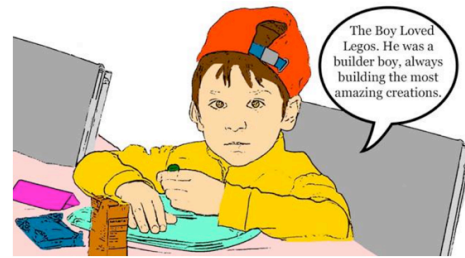
Author Jordan Hanssen, in life vest and dry suit, will share his harrowing tale of over 70 days rowing from New York to England. Faced with hurricane-level winds, flying fish, and sharks, the four young men triumph, this tale should not be missed.

Coloring sheets of Jordan, his crew, their boat and their dinosaur mascot will be passed out after the program. For children & adults.

OPEN HOUSE & SNAP SHOT DAY

Saturday, April 19th 10 am – 4 pm

Free Coffee & Cake



& at 2 pm, Cooking ... with Grandma

In addition, at 2 p.m., we'll be hosting Grandma Millie and several of her grandchildren as they share their favorite recipes and demonstrate their cooking skills in making Greek Baklava. Enjoy coffee and prepackaged samples.

Mille Lindell is the author of *Cooking Around the World with Grandma*. The book follows Grandma Millie and her grandchildren as they explore cooking and share feasts from around the world during weekly summer visits. Includes easy-to-follow recipes and interesting facts about each country sure to please the young chef!

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Thanks for your consideration of this opportunity!

Another way to contribute, Participate in

Kitsap Great Give May 6th

Read about it at www.kitsapgreatgive.org

PLANT SALE POTTING PARTY ??

We are planning a potting party in the next couple of weeks; if anyone wants to help, contact Carol Campbell at campbellcarol@wavecable.com