

Join the Library's Author Discussion Group  
Kris Wiley for The News-Review

Readers interested in catching up on a favorite author or diving into the work of a new-to-you writer may want to join Roseburg Public Library's Author Discussion Group.

Launched in fall 2020, the group chooses an author who has written several books so there is some variety. Participants read anything by or about the author, and we meet on Zoom for about an hour to discuss our reading experiences.

Coming up at 6:30 p.m. June 15, we will examine the work of Jane Austen. Those interested in joining the conversation may email me at [kwiley@cityofroseburg.org](mailto:kwiley@cityofroseburg.org) for the Zoom link.

To prepare for our meeting, I re-read "Pride and Prejudice" for the first time in about 35 years and loved it just as much as I did when I was a teenager. Elizabeth Bennett's sharp wit plays well against Mr. Darcy's aloofness, and their miscommunications eventually lead to a great scene in which the pair admit their shortcomings and profess their love.

Austen's books examine the hierarchies of English society. The wealthy Mr. Darcy initially scorns Elizabeth because her extended family is common, and Elizabeth simply must marry in order to secure her future.

Austen's work also features close relationships between sisters, such as Elizabeth's bond with her older sister, Jane, who has romantic woes of her own.

Those themes also are found in what has become my favorite Austen book, "Sense and Sensibility." Perhaps I enjoyed it so much because I loved the movie adaptation starring Emma Thompson and Kate Winslet as Elinor and Marianne Dashwood.

The Dashwoods live with their mother and younger sister in a relative's cottage after their father dies and they are left with little means. Elinor and Marianne have romantic prospects, but they have little agency when they discover those men have previous attachments.

Most of the time I read only one book for each Author Discussion Group meeting, but I am enjoying Austen so much I may be prepared to talk about three or four of her works. Our group does not set requirements on how much participants read in order to join the discussions, although it helps if everyone finishes at least one book.

The Author Discussion Group meets on Zoom about four times each year. Previously, we have read William Faulkner, Joan Didion, Zora Neale Hurston, John Steinbeck, Amitav Ghosh and Sandra Cisneros, among others.

For all of you Austen fans, let me know which book I should read next. I am leaning toward “Emma” because I love the movie “Clueless” starring Alicia Silverstone, but I am open to suggestions.

#### This Week’s Library Events

Tuesday, May 2 – 10 a.m., Grab-and-go craft kits while supplies last

Wednesday, May 3 – 4-4:45 p.m., Club de Idioma Español | Spanish Club

Wednesday, May 3 – 7 p.m., Oak Woodlands of Oregon presented by Steve Denney in partnership with the Umpqua Valley Audubon Society