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Subject: January 2009 recommendations  
Posted by [Maren](#) on Thu, 01 Jan 2009 06:57:32 GMT  
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Happy 2009!

This is the place to recommend books that you loved to other Robin McKinley fans. We do ask that you observe the Pollyanna spirit--if you want to discuss a book that you did not love, this is not the forum you're looking for.

Also, remember that much of the Great Pollyanna List is searchable and friendable at our LibraryThing catalog. All of the November 2008 recommendations have now been added to it, and I hope to maintain a similar lag time for the long term.

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Subject: Re: Current recommendation thread  
Posted by [Susan from Athens](#) on Thu, 01 Jan 2009 23:06:37 GMT  
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I have just finished King's Shield the third and latest book in Sherwood Smith's Inda Series. I started this series from a recommendation on Pollyanna and I have enjoyed it immensely (so has my sister) thank you to the two people who recommended it (and I have forgotten who you are, ungrateful sod that I am) I am also too lazy to look you up on Library Thing. I enjoyed Inda and The Fox tremendously and this installment too. The world building is wonderful and the characters are fascinating and although Inda is in many ways a bit too good to be true, there are enough flaws to make him sympathetic and interesting. I have enjoyed how the story evolves and the intricacies of the politics and interpersonal relationships. I like how the societal roles unfold and highlight different characters. Three most enjoyable reads.

On a different note, I would like to recommend a cookbook, as we haven't really started such a discussion here and as I have a collection of cookbooks I love. So come to think of it I will recommend two:

Julia Child's The Way to Cook, because I really like the way that she has a master recipe which she explains completely, clearly and unfussily, going in depth to discuss cooking techniques and then riffs on variations. The Chocolate mousse is to die for and the pears stewed in wine syrup (which I make with bitter chocolate sauce) are divine.

Claudia Rodin: The Book of Jewish Food, because it is a social history a geography lesson and a font of amazing recipes that work.

I could go on, but I will stop there (for now).

I guess it is a sort of a threat :)  
Of the nicest kind.

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Subject: Re: Current recommendation thread  
Posted by [ferndale1910](#) on Fri, 02 Jan 2009 00:35:02 GMT  
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I'm re-re-re-reading Carol Kendall: The Gamage Cup, The Whisper of Glocken (sequel), and the Firelings (pre-sort-of-quel). Must go fetch Firelings from cold attic, to read by warm stove.

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Subject: Re: Current recommendation thread  
Posted by [Guest](#) on Fri, 02 Jan 2009 01:18:28 GMT  
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Susan from Athens wrote on Fri, 02 January 2009 12:06I have just finished King's Shield the third and latest book in Sherwood Smith's Inda Series. I started this series from a recommendation on Pollyanna and I have enjoyed it immensely (so has my sister) thank you to the two people who recommended it (and I have forgotten who you are, ungrateful sod that I am) I am also too lazy to look you up on Library Thing. I enjoyed Inda and The Fox tremendously and this installment too.  
\*snip\*

I suspect I may have been one of the recommenders of the Inda series, Inda was one of the best books I had read in a LONG time when I first read it, and I will happily rave about it to anyone prepared to listen.

Smith has written lots of other books, many in the same world as Inda, and I recommend the Crown Duel/Court Duel duology as well (the first Smith books I read)

I bounced off Senrid (a historical precursor) as the more juvenile language format was more than I could cope with, but there are lots more of Smith to enjoy :)

In a slightly similar style, I would also recommend Jim Butchers Furies of Calderon - the beginning of an excellent series in which book 5 has just been published (but I havent read yet)

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Subject: Re: Current recommendation thread  
Posted by [Laura](#) on Fri, 02 Jan 2009 01:56:33 GMT

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Susan from Athens wrote on Thu, 01 January 2009 18:06

On a different note, I would like to recommend a cookbook, as we haven't really started such a discussion here and as I have a collection of cookbooks I love. So come to think of it I will recommend two:

Julia Child's The Way to Cook, because I really like the way that she has a master recipe which she explains completely, clearly and unfussily, going in depth to discuss cooking techniques and then riffs on variations. The Chocolate mousse is to die for and the pears stewed in wine syrup (which I make with bitter chocolate sauce) are divine.

Claudia Rodin: The Book of Jewish Food, because it is a social history a geography lesson and a font of amazing recipes that work.

I could go on, but I will stop there (for now).

I guess it is a sort of a threat :)

Of the nicest kind.

This is a great idea! Mods? Any chance we could get a cookbook rec thread started in Playing With Your Food?

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Subject: Re: Current recommendation thread

Posted by [jmeadows](#) on Fri, 02 Jan 2009 02:08:27 GMT

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Laura wrote on Thu, 01 January 2009 20:56

This is a great idea! Mods? Any chance we could get a cookbook rec thread started in Playing With Your Food?

Just added one. Good idea!

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Subject: Re: Current recommendation thread

Posted by [Laura](#) on Mon, 05 Jan 2009 19:53:11 GMT

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So I took a gander through Library Thing and saw that no one has recommended the beautiful The Time Traveler's Wife by Audrey Niffenegger (unless I missed it on the list somehow...). This is one of those books that my mom's bookclub read and she raved about it for eons before I finally picked it up. I should have known it would be amazing, because my mom has good taste. Sorry for doubting you, Mom!

The premise is that Henry, our protagonist, has chrono-displacement syndrome, a genetic disorder

which causes him to take involuntary trips backward and forward in time. Claire, his wife, has known him her whole life because of these trips. That's all I can really say without ruining it. It is one of the most heart-wrenchingly beautiful love stories I've ever read. I'm still working up the inner fortitude to read it a second time one of these days.

Yes, this is the kind of book that requires loin-girding to get through. It is so worth it I can't even say.

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Subject: Re: Current recommendation thread  
Posted by [ssshunt](#) on Mon, 05 Jan 2009 20:40:44 GMT  
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I think I'll have to break down and read TTW, I think. It's been haunting me, everyone is STILL talking about it.

If I wanted to read Terry Pratchett, (sp?) where would I start?

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Subject: Re: Current recommendation thread  
Posted by [Mori-neko](#) on Mon, 05 Jan 2009 20:58:34 GMT  
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With Pratchett, you can start pretty much anywhere. I'd say go to your local bookstore/library/whatever and pick up one that looks fun to you.

Re. TTW, I actually had to read it for an english class a few years back. It's a really fascinating premise, and very well done.

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Subject: Re: Current recommendation thread  
Posted by [katherinegrace](#) on Tue, 06 Jan 2009 22:11:52 GMT  
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I started with Hogfather (which is still one of my favorites of his), which features Death and his granddaughter Susan.

I adore Susan. Lots of fun fairy-tales-turned-strange.

Two titles I just finished that no one's recommended yet:  
The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society, by Mary Ann Shaffer and Annie Barrows, and  
Graceling by Kristin Cashore.

Guernsey takes place right after WWII and is riveting - all correspondence and a few journal entries near the end. It made me beam with delight and wish I could move to Guernsey to befriend them all.

Graceling is more of an adventure/fantasy, though very compelling in its own way. Certain people have Graces (a special talent). Katsa's Grace is killing.

And one I read a while back which is certainly a keeper: Love Walked In by Marisa de los Santos. It's was her first book; now there is a sequel. It is about a young woman waiting for a Cary Grant-kind of man, but when he comes along, ends up falling in love with his young daughter Clare instead. How Cornelia changes, from a somewhat aimless waitress to loving surrogate mother is sweet, somewhat heartbreaking and written very, very well. Santos has a very unique and real way with words.

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Subject: Re: Current recommendation thread  
Posted by [L.R.K.](#) on Fri, 09 Jan 2009 10:25:29 GMT  
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Wyndham Martyn: "Anthony Trent, Master Criminal" - a writer of "crook stories" falls for temptation - and, well, the title says it all.

Louisa May Alcott: "Work"(Re-read)

Berlie Doherty: "Fairy Tales"

Eva Ibbotson: "The Secret of Platform 13" - Fun!

Agatha Christie: "Peril at End House" - Hercule Poirot

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Subject: Re: Current recommendation thread  
Posted by [GBKDalton](#) on Fri, 09 Jan 2009 23:41:03 GMT  
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I'll recommend Breaking Trail by Arlene Blum, who also wrote Annapurna, A Woman's Place (which I'm now meaning to read). Blum was and is a groundbreaking woman climber, trekker, and biophysicist. This was a great memoir, and I would recommend it to anyone but particularly to those of you who like to hike and travel.

ssshunt wrote on Mon, 05 January 2009 15:40

If I wanted to read Terry Prachett, (sp?) where would I start?

Personally I would start at the beginning of one of the arcs, or with a stand alone. The arcs include Death (Mort), the City Watch(Guards! Guards!), Rincewind(The Color of Magic), and the Witches (Weird Sisters). Some of the books further down in the arcs don't really stand alone in that they can be so much funnier if you've already read the back stories.

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Subject: Re: Current recommendation thread  
Posted by [Beauty/Anna](#) on Thu, 15 Jan 2009 19:22:30 GMT  
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A gook book is Amanda and Miranda by Richard Peck. He is a fabulous writer of young adult books and books for younger readers but this book is quite different from the rest of his books. I also fairly liked Just Ella by Margaret Peterson Haddix. I mostly liked it because of the very different twist it had on Cinderella.

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Subject: Re: Current recommendation thread  
Posted by [holmes44](#) on Fri, 16 Jan 2009 02:41:51 GMT  
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i am almost finished nora roberts pagan stone and it is very good.

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Subject: Re: Current recommendation thread  
Posted by [Beauty/Anna](#) on Tue, 20 Jan 2009 17:51:25 GMT  
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I just read Water Song by Suzanne Weyn (more detailes read the "New What are you reading" thread)

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Subject: Re: Current recommendation thread  
Posted by [Susan from Athens](#) on Tue, 20 Jan 2009 21:42:56 GMT  
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I've just finished reading At Knit's End: Meditations for women who knit too much, by Stephanie Pearl-McPhee (the Yarn Harlot) and it was a hoot! Of course, I read more about knitting than I actually knit, a trait that has been true for a vast number of my activities throughout my life ;)

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Subject: Re: Current recommendation thread  
Posted by [kfooster2047](#) on Wed, 28 Jan 2009 01:24:33 GMT  
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I highly recommend Louise Penny's Inspector Gamache mysteries - cozy but literate with interesting characters and interesting themes. The first three form a nice arc and then the fourth changes ground a little but I enjoyed them all. Oh, and set (in full or in part) in an idyllic Quebec village and filled with wonderful food references. Delightful!

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Subject: Re: Current recommendation thread  
Posted by [Guest](#) on Wed, 28 Jan 2009 02:33:51 GMT  
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Thanks for the Louise Penny recommendations - I have the first book out of the library ready to read in the weekend.

For the knitters and quilters I can make these recommendations

Friday Night Knitters Club and Knit Too (books 1 and 2) by Kate Jacobs

She also wrote another book about an American TV cooking personality - Comfort Food which is excellent

<http://www.katejacobs.com/>

For the Quilters, I am an enormous fan of the Jennifer Chiaverini - Elm Creek Quilters books - 10 in the series I think

<http://www.elmcreek.net/>

Can all be read as standalones, but there is a continuing story thread through which benefits from reading in order, and delightful

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Subject: Re: Current recommendation thread  
Posted by [shalea](#) on Wed, 28 Jan 2009 15:48:30 GMT  
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From those of my stack o' books hauled painstakingly to the Netherlands for my two week business trip that I had time to read, I recommend the following:

A College of Magics, Caroline Stevermer. Sort of a turn-of-the-century-Europe feel, with occasional magic. The main character is neither all-knowing nor infallible, and I fear she and I are more alike than I would care to admit.

Wheel of the Infinite, Martha Wells. The main character is NOT a teenager! LOL. She's a woman of indeterminate (older) age with a chequered past returning to, essentially, face that past. And save the world. The setting is sort of Asian, but not overtly so, and is well-crafted and well thought out.

Snow Crash, Neal Stephenson. Cyber-punk. Well, sort of. It takes itself FAR less seriously and is much smarter than the vast realm of most cyber punk that I've encountered otherwise. For example, the main character's name is "Hiro Protagonist," which should give you a good idea. It's a bit slower-paced than you'd expect and the plot requires a good bit of exposition, but it's all handled well and is generally a lot of fun.

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Subject: Re: Current recommendation thread  
Posted by [Guest](#) on Thu, 29 Jan 2009 08:46:53 GMT  
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Thankyou to the Louise Penny fans, I have just finished Still Life and LOVED it!!

I never realised I was a fan of crime/mysteries, they kinda snuck up on me (too much watching CSI type programs?)

Anyway I have the next one - Dead Cold - reserved at the library. Also the 4th one which isnt a Three Pines book - will I spoil anything for myself if I read that before reading the previous 3?

And can I bounce up and down about the College of Magics recommendation (sequel is Scholar of Magics) - to me they feel like they are almost like a slightly more grown up version of Ms McKinley's work. I hope it doesnt offend either author if I say they have a similar 'feel' to them.

Stevermer does an excellent series of 3 books with Patricia Wrede (in a similar Edwardian type universe) starting with the Enchanted Chocolate Pot, and I adore these.

They may appeal to Heyer fans.

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Subject: Re: Current recommendation thread  
Posted by [kfooster2047](#) on Thu, 29 Jan 2009 13:46:20 GMT  
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I don't think it would spoil anything to read the 4th Louise Penny book earlier; however, I would definitely read the first three in order since they have a definite arc. I have always liked mysteries but the kind I like (which I believe are called cozies) are often written really poorly. It's so nice to find someone like Louise Penny who can really write.

Susan Wittig Albert has a series of mysteries about China Bayles (ex-attorney, herb shop proprietor) that I like. Normally I void themed murder series but these are good and well-written. The first one is Thyme of Death.

Stevermer sounds great - definitely on my list to read!

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Subject: Re: Current recommendation thread  
Posted by [Beauty/Anna](#) on Sat, 31 Jan 2009 17:19:02 GMT  
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Does anyone recomend Enna Burning by Shannon Hale? Comments? Yes, No, Maybe so?

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Subject: Re: Current recommendation thread  
Posted by [kfooster2047](#) on Sat, 31 Jan 2009 20:50:35 GMT  
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I haven't personally read it, but several people whose opinions I respect are very enthusiastic about Shannon Hale and give her books high marks.

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Subject: Re: Current recommendation thread  
Posted by [Maren](#) on Sun, 01 Feb 2009 06:05:37 GMT  
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This thread has now been locked for archiving. Look for the current month's recommendation thread right under the FAQ. January 2009 recommendations will be added to our LibraryThing

catalog by the end of February.

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