

## The Poorly-made Book

Joanne Toth

Hitchcock's *Rear Window*: The Well made film

John Fawell

Southern Illinois University Press

In his book *Hitchcock's Rear Window: The Well-Made Film*, John Fawell claims that Alfred Hitchcock's movie *Rear Window* is the best movie that Hitchcock has ever directed; or at least that's what the inside flaps say the book is about. However the book goes on and on about what other people thought about the movie, and barely talks about Fawell's reasons why he thinks *Rear Window* is a well-made film.

When I first saw this book I thought it looked interesting. I really enjoyed the movie and agreed that it was a well-made film. I thought the book would have been more about how the movie was made rather than a critique about scenes in the movie. I kept waiting for Fawell to talk about the movie as a whole, but he went on about each individual scene, which made me feel uninterested in the book. That's why the front and back flaps of the book where a little bit misleading. The topics that the flaps say the book is about are scarcely covered in the book. I found it to be frustrating; you wait for a topic that sounds a little bit interesting amidst a lot of boredom just for Fawell to say two lines about it and go back to some more quotes from people who I don't know.

Fawell talks about other people in his book like he knows them personally, which he very well may, but the reader doesn't know who the heck he's quoting and why that should make any difference to us. "As Anthony Mazzella puts it..." (23) Why should Mazzella's opinion matter? Fawell will quote someone, like an author or someone who knows a lot about Hitchcock or movies in general, but that isn't clear until the middle of the book. He quotes so many different people that I found it hard to keep them apart. Most if not all of the quotes are from people who may have been famous or well known back in the day that the movie was made, but if a person read this book because they liked the movie, but wasn't around back when it was made, they would have no idea who he's talking about. The book came out in 2001 but sounds like it was written just after the movie came out. A quote from Tati doesn't mean a darn thing to me. Who is Jacques Tati? If you want to know the answer to this question you have to go back to the flaps to find out. Tati's background isn't clear until later in the book—way later, like the end of the book, in the notes section at the end of the book to be exact.

For every quote there is a little number at the end that has a note about it in the notes section of the book at the end. This section is very useful because if it weren't there we wouldn't know who the quote was from. However, when we go to the notes section, the note may say what book the quote came from, who said it, but that doesn't mean anything to me if I don't know that person, or their background. The worst part about the notes section of the book is that he quotes so often from other people that it's like reading a dictionary. If you come to a word that you don't know in the dictionary, it tells you to go to another place, but when you get there, it still doesn't make any sense; so you end up spending more time flipping pages back and forth until you finally give up.

The quotes from other people are nice, but over the top. There are way too many of them from too many different people. It makes it hard to keep them straight. When I was looking for a good quote from Fawell, I realized that the only good quotes were from other people. Fawell didn't have any writing that was worth quoting. I guess that's why there are so many quotes from other people. He doesn't have much to say when you take away all those quotes. He brings up some interesting ideas, but the way that it is written is not very interesting.

At the beginning of the book I found it difficult to stay interested because all of his sentences were very boring; they were all the same length about the same subject, and very repetitive. He would repeat himself with the same words, but in a different order. Not that I have any room to talk about boring the reader, if you're even reading my essay still. Hey if you read this far it can't be that bad, right?

In order to understand most of what is quoted or compared to, you must not only watch *Rear Window*, but you must also consider watching all of Hitchcock's other movies. Fawell compares *Rear Window* to many of Hitchcock's other films, so in order to keep up; you must watch all of the other movies. Fawell compares things like characters, personality, and the type of shots he uses. "Most of the shots are John Ford – like in their natural dependence on balances of twos and threes (37)." Who is John Ford? Who cares?

There is a thin line between analyzing an elemental detail, and over analyzing to death; Fawell is on the border line, and in some places he goes over that line. In some places in the book, he analyzes a particular scene. First he tells us what's going on and who is saying what lines. Then he'll analyze an aspect of that scene. Ten pages later he'll reintroduce that entire scene and talk about something else, to the point where I don't care anymore!

I originally chose this book because I really liked *Rear Window*, the book wasn't too long and I figured that a book about a great movie couldn't be all bad, but you can't be right all the time! Sometimes you have to judge a book by its cover.

Although I have said some things about this book that hasn't exactly been positive, there are some good elements. Fawell does a good job of explaining the plates (the photographs of a scene from the movie) that he chooses to use in the book. His explanation of the scene really helps you to see the details in the plates that you may have missed before. In fact the only complaint I have about the plates is that there aren't enough of them. There are some scenes that Fawell could have put a plate in instead of saying so much.

I know that a lot of my comments about this book weren't very positive or nice, but by reading this book I learned that I don't like these types of books that talk about movies, I just don't care that much. Maybe for you this book will be more interesting, if you like to analyze every little detail, and you have a really short memory, so that the repetition doesn't bother you. My overall advice to you is to rent or buy *Rear Window* on DVD because you get a great movie, and if you're interested in stuff talked about in the book; watch the special features because it covers the same exact material, in a shorter and more interesting way.

## The True Test

Melissa Santé

The Test

Dorothy Bryant

The Feminist Press

\$13.95

When I first began reading The Test, by Dorothy Bryant I found it slightly tedious, and difficult to read, but as the plot and the characters developed I became more intrigued. The book is a story of a widowed elderly man and his divorced middle-aged daughter, both of whom are suffering from the disturbing realities of growing old. We share one day in the lives of Pat, a patient, strong-minded woman and her father Pete, a strong-willed, Italian immigrant in his eighties who is suffering from senile dementia. Pete's determination to stay independent has Pat bringing her father to his final appeal for his driver's license. "It's test-drive day for the ten-mile-an-hour terror of the road" (123). This is a day that Pete has been looking forward to, while it is a day that Pat has been dreading.

"Hello."

"Hi Pat."

"Yes, Dad."

"You coming down today?"

"Yes Dad. We just talked a few minutes ago."

"Yeah sure I know." (4)

"Does he pretend, embarrassed, or being reminded, does he recall that he has just spoken to me? My mother complained (for how long, a year, two or three?) that, when they were alone, he would ask her the same question over and over again. Questions? Innocuous enough, I thought, nothing to make her bite her lip with such fury. Now I have learned how a repeated, plaintive question can scratch a line into a groove into a raw wound, etched deeper and deeper. The ring of my telephone has become an alarm announcing another scrape of the wound." (4-5).

Bryant does a wonderful job at portraying the effects and complexity of old age in not only the elderly, but on their children and caretakers as well. I found myself becoming annoyed by Pete's repeated questions and confabulations (a filling in of gaps in memory by free fabrication), and I felt sympathy for Pat who tried desperately throughout the book to stay calm and rational. Caring for someone who suffers from dementia is an extremely difficult job and watching her ailing father invoked a fear of growing old within herself.

"Dying, I have accepted. Growing old is something else" (18)

"Old age is more cruel than I ever imagined, uncovering bur-

ied defeats, desires, bitterness" (119).

Growing old can be scary for everyone involved. For Pat watching her father return to childhood before her eyes was a very disturbing experience. Especially when she realized she is growing old herself. "This face is it, unmasked, uneven, weathered, cracked by lines that split wildly when I laugh....This face droops around the mouth, usually more somber than the thoughts behind it"(135). Old age can cause many different problems that can affect both your mental and physical health.

Pete suffered from senile dementia, which is a group of symptoms involving progressive impairment of all aspects of brain function. Dementia may be diagnosed when there is an impairment of two or more brain functions, including language, memory, visual-spatial perception, emotional behavior or personality and cognitive skills (such as calculation, abstract thinking or judgement). Usually the first symptom to appear is forgetfulness, which leads to decreased problem solving and severe memory loss. Other symptoms of dementia include: inability to concentrate, altered sense of perception, disorientation, confusion (usually severe), altered sleep and eating patterns, hallucinations and delusions, absent or impaired language ability, and personality changes. The changes in personality can be severe and make the patient very difficult to care for. The patient will often become anxious, irritable, depressed, indecisive, self centered, and inflexible. They may experience poor temper control, and they also may lose the ability to interact in social and personal situations.

Throughout the book Pete showed many of these symptoms especially the personality changes. He was very anxious, depressed and self-centered. Pat was often frustrated and angered by his lack of concern for anyone other than himself. Pat is extremely bothered that her father never asks about the welfare of her son or his lover (who is dying of AIDS).

"He pushes aside the tragedy coming down on us while he wheedles, whines, manipulates, caring for nothing but his needs, his narrow interests his petty comforts, to be served in his way" (125).

Pat is often caught in an inner struggle between being patient with her elderly father, who "fed and clothed me, sent me to school, never lifted a hand against me, nourished me as well as he could in his own way"(129), and angry with the disapproving, self-centered and hurtful man he has become. Even when enraged by his words Pat remains supportive and realizes that "he has rights that do not depend on my understanding"(74).

There is never any resolution to the conflict in this story. The last lines spoken by a panicked and frightened Pete to his daughter (who visits every Wednesday) "when are you coming back?"(146). I was left a little depressed, but appreciating the honest portrayal of "real

life". If you (as a reader) can enjoy an emotional ride that will leave you reeling, then I recommend you read this book. If you are looking for a fairy tale "happy ending" then this book is not for you.

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## Astrophysics Lite

Vin Rideout

### How the Universe Got its Spots

Janna Levin

The mysteries of the universe and life itself are simply the most interesting things a person can contemplate. Sadly, most of us don't have the time to look at all the evidence at hand and come to our own conclusions about these vast possibilities. Rarely is anything of this magnitude given more thought than that of a ten minute meditation lying awake in bed, or over a cigarette. Luckily, scientists like Janna Levin are there to do this for us, and present their educated insights in tasty, bite-sized nuggets. In her book, "How the Universe Got its Spots", Levin attempts to present the reader with insights into infinity, Einstein's theories, and her particular field of study, Topology, all meshed with tidbits of her personal life.

The format of the book is a series of letters from Levin to her mother, which I'd imagine were never intended for publication. Contrary to that fact (or perhaps because of it), the book reads like any other, flowing regularly in terms of both chronology and the presentation of incremental ideas. This perspective also gives the book a very personal feel, which I would imagine is lacking from most books about Physics. I feel that the format is one of the keys to making the book at least semi-accessible to the uninitiated.

As I stated earlier, the main strength of the book is the presentation of theories, ideas, and paradoxes. The two topics I found most interesting were infinity and the interaction of extra dimensions. One of my favorite of such paradoxes is that of the Greek philosopher, Zeno. Levin presents it as such:

"[Zeno] argued that if any given distance could be divided in half then the two resultant pieces could be divided in half. Repeating the process an infinite number of times, there must be an infinite number of pieces across even an inch. We could never cross the room because we would have to move past the smallest infinitesimal piece infinitely quickly... yet we do move." p.13

I concluded from this passage that particles must not be divisible into infinitesimal pieces, because it is theoretically impossible for us to move infinitely quickly in relation to anything. This is typical of this book: Levin merely presented a paradox, but my mind jumped to a conclusion about that nature of reality. Because nature has not yet been shown to produce infinity in any of its creations, it makes sense to me that there should be a particle so small as to be the fundamental

building block of reality.

In chapter ten, Levin describes the interactions between different sets of dimensions. She cites the book *Flatland* by Edwin Abbott Abbott (no, I don't think that was an unintentional repetition). *Flatland* is about a two-dimensional world, with two-dimensional life and observers. If we imagine that the two-dimensional world is represented in x and y coordinates, and we could somehow interact with this realm of limited dimensions, our three-dimensional objects would have very interesting interactions when dropped in the z-direction. A two-dimensional entity observing a sphere being dropped would see the movement of the object through his plane as a dot appearing out of thin air, then a circle increasing in size to the middle of the sphere, and then shrinking and eventually disappearing from his realm. If an extra-dimensional object were to interact with our three-dimensional world, we would see it as a morphing three-dimensional object, fading in and out of existence. I admit that this is not the most relevant information (unless you have seen such a phenomenon), but it is interesting nonetheless.

While I did enjoy some parts of the book, there were also negative aspects of it as well. I felt that many of the topics were either too inaccessible to the layman, or simply not well enough explained. Topology was one of these topics that flew right over my head, which was unfortunate because it is Levin's main area of study. Furthermore, the information about Levin's life seemed irrelevant to the overall theme of the book. It did not seem to relate to the subject matter in any meaningful way.

Many times, I found myself starting to absorb the letters on the page, but not the meaning. Even when rereading, it seemed as though I would have needed at least some basic knowledge of Astrophysics to understand the concepts. Instead of becoming mired in my own lack of knowledge, I found it useful at these times to simply skip to the beginning of the next chapter rather than trudge through the incremental ideas for which I didn't even comprehend the foundations. This worked for me, because every chapter started from ground zero, while the rest of the chapter often seemed intended for a physics expert, and perhaps Levin did not produce this book with the average reader in mind. However, I can only analyze this book from my own vantage point. If Levin was indeed trying to write a book for the uninitiated, she should have either simplified her explanation of Topology, or removed the subject from the book altogether.

Levin spends a brief time in each chapter discussing her personal life. She mostly talks about her (now ex-) husband, Warren, and how her chosen profession affects those close to her. While the ideas appealed to me because they seemed somewhat relevant to my own life, I don't think this would be the case for most. I could be wrong

about this; maybe stories about lost love and slowly disintegrating relationships appeal to many. However, I am certain that this tangent has no relevance to the story Levin is trying to tell. It says nothing of infinity, space-time, or Topology.

I don't mean to criticize Levin's writing too much. In fact, I quite enjoyed the parts of the book which I understood. Many of the ideas Levin gave to me I would never have thought on my own. Her book contained many brilliant insights into the nature of the universe, as well as the nature of the scientist. When I ponder the possibilities after reading this book, I will have a slightly greater understanding of the fundamentals of both very large and very small scale physics; a stronger foundation on which to build my own thoughts.

## Clea & Zeus Make No Sense

Eric Wallace

Clea & Zeus Divorce

Emily Prager

In this day and age of reality television, it is somewhat difficult to imagine only having one reality show, let alone to imagine that that one show is not television, but theater. However, if you can, imagine that the only reality show is a series of two-hour specials following the marriage and subsequent married life of one couple. Imagine that this is the most beautiful couple imaginable, and probably the most talented. In the ten years since they got married on stage, they have become the world's best-known, most popular people. Now imagine that nothing in any way related to this couple makes any sense. This is the setting of Emily Prager's *Clea & Zeus Divorce*.

The couple described above, of course, is Clea and Zeus, and as you may have guessed by now, they're getting a divorce. The book tells the story of their last show, which seems to really just be a reprise of the past ten years, interspersed with events backstage during the performance, and flashbacks which may or may not actually be part of the show; unfortunately, Prager does not seem to have mastered the art of letting the reader know what is actually happening and what is being remembered, so the timeline of the book turns out rather disjointed and somewhat confusing. On the bright side, though, at least the disjointed and confusing timeline fits in with the disjointed and confusing feel of the rest of the book.

An extraordinarily unlikely cast of characters thrown in to equally unlikely situations can be a good recipe for an entertaining story. Prager even seems to have something of a talent for engaging turns of phrase. For example: "As with all men who are born sexually attractive to women, there was a quiet and caution in Zeus, a faint bewilderment that cloaked his body and clashed with the perpetually beckoning light in his eyes."(p.5) The writing displays a firm command of the English language that is all too often rendered irrelevant by inane content and inscrutable characters.

Perhaps one reason for writing about Clea and Zeus' divorce is that ordinary people revel in the troubles of extraordinary couples, especially troubles as common as adultery. However, while the issue leading to the divorce is rather commonplace, most of their other problems are not; for example, the end of a ten-year dramatized relationship, Zeus' growing laudanum addiction, and Clea's conviction that their final show is going to be cut off by an atomic blast, predicted by her psychic friend, are not the kind of things that the ordinary reader

can really imagine happening to him or her. Furthermore, Clea and Zeus are portrayed as so nearly superhuman, and many of the other important characters, such as Clea's assistant, a Xhosa witch doctor named Miss Florie, are so out of the ordinary, that it is well nigh impossible to identify with any of them.

Throughout the book, Prager seems to be trying to give the impression that Clea is slowly going insane; however, her method of conveying the idea of Clea's growing break with reality is by having Clea do more and more things that make no sense, which doesn't really make much of a difference, since the book is so lacking in the area of sense and rationality anyway. It is tempting to excuse this lack as surrealism, but I would argue that calling *Clea and Zeus Divorce* surrealistic is far too charitable; it definitely makes an attempt at surrealism, but I would not go so far as to say that it succeeds. When I think of surrealism, I think of Salvador Dali's paintings, in which he took everyday objects, warped them and put them in strange places and situations. Dali's paintings don't really make sense, but they're fun to look at, and you can sometimes find some sort of symbolism in them. *Clea & Zeus Divorce* gets the nonsensicality down pat, but doesn't quite manage to be fun to look at, or to convey any sort of coherent idea.

All in all, my biggest problem with *Clea & Zeus Divorce* was that it seemed to go so far out of its way to be strange and surrealistic that it lost any convincing characters or storyline. The writing was engaging at times, but usually those sections were interrupted by a sentence or two that made no sense. For example, this speech of Clea's on the subject of impressing men,

Ordinarily ... you go for clothing or makeup. Or you stick your tits out, you know, or talk knowledgeably about Sartre. Sometimes, you keep your mouth shut and go demure... These males, you know, they pin you with this force field and it's all you can do to exist. I've got these gatherer genes in me. When I fall in love, I want to rush right out and gather wild greens to make a salad. (47)

If you found that passage clever and engaging, you might enjoy the book, but if it made as little sense to you as it did to me, don't waste your time.

## Countdown to Armageddon

Jeffery J Phillips

### The Remnant

Jerry B Jenkins and Tim F LaHaye

Tyndale House publishers, Inc

US\$24.99

“Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for the number is that of a man; and his number is six hundred sixty-six.”

-Revelation 13:18 (Holy Bible 1302)

The Remnant and The Left Behind series are a fictionalized account of the prophecy of the end times told about in The Bible and most notably the book of “Revelation”. The Remnant is the tenth book in the Left Behind series, co-authored by Jerry Jenkins, who is the writer of the series and Dr. Tim LaHaye. Dr. LaHaye, who is one of the leading theologians on Biblical prophecy and the book of “Revelations”, contrived the idea of the Left Behind series (Fact Sheet).

The original idea behind writing the series was to give the book of “Revelation” a story line with characters that Christians could follow and relate to. The series also had to be entertaining, with action, adventure and drama, that it would be attractive to the secular population. The Remnant does a great job at giving the Christian reader a good prophecy-based fiction novel. It also succeeds at giving the non-Christian reader a novel full of white-knuckle adventure and thrilling drama. The Remnant will keep both the non-Christian and Christian reading for hours, not wanting to put the book down for even a moment. In fact, not only did The Remnant debut at number one on the five major bestseller lists, but the previous three books in the series also debuted at number one. According to [leftbehind.com](http://leftbehind.com) more than 55 million copies of the Left Behind series have been sold, and it is the fastest selling adult fiction series on the market today (Fact Sheet).

The main characters of The Remnant belong to two groups, the first group is the Tribulation Force, which is a group of Christians that includes: Rayford Steele, Chloe Steele Williams, Abdullah Smith and George Sebastian. The second group, are the enemies of God, the global community Peacekeepers, which includes: Supreme Potentate Nicolae Jetty Carpathia (the anti Christ) and Leon Fortunato (the false prophet). The plot of The Remnant continues where the last book, Desecration left off. The earth is in peril; it is the fifth and sixth year of the

tribulation—a seven-year period after the rapture (the disappearances of all of the believers in Christ)—and before the great battle of Armageddon as told about in the book of “Revelation”. The earth has been decimated by famines, sickness, heat, fire and a large number of sea and land animals dying. Because of all of these disasters, the population is now less than half of what it was prior to the tribulation. The anti Christ is the supreme commander of the world and his main goal is to have every person worship him as his or her god; if you don’t the punishment is death by the guillotine. After all of the disasters and disappearances earth is rapidly approaching the war to end all wars, Armageddon.

From the beginning of The Remnant the author sets the reader up for an action packed novel full of spine tingling excitement and drama. The words and phrasing that are used does an excellent job of describing the events going on, and allows the reader to almost literally see the story being played out like a movie. As chapter one begins, Rayford, Abdullah and a few other members of the Tribulation force are holed up in a canyon called Petra, with the Global Community Peacekeeping bombers bearing down on them, ready to drop their payloads and annihilate the Tribulation Force.

Rayford could not see far in the raging firestorm, but every huddled pilgrim around him was ablaze. Abdullah rolled to one side and lay in a fetal position, his face and head still cocooned in his arms. White, yellow, orange, black roaring flames engulfed him as if he were a human wick for a demonic holocaust.

One by one the people around Rayford stood and raised their arms. Their hoods, their hair, their beards, faces, arms, hands, robes, clothes all roared with conflagration as if the fire were fueled beneath them. (Jenkins 9)

The authors use a lot of this type of action packed writing in the first chapter; in fact, after reading the first chapter I was eager to read on. Unfortunately, the main story gets a bit bogged down with some sub-plots that are not nearly as exciting. The sub-plots will keep the reader involved and interested but not to the extent that the main story does in chapter one. Finally in chapter nine the pace picks up and the reader is once again brought on a nail biting experience.

As chapter nine starts, one of the main characters, George Sebastian is being held hostage by a group that is in opposition to George’s group of Christians. George has been trying to escape for some time now and finally his opportunity has come.

At the first sensation of skin on skin, George Sebastian called on all his years of training, football and lifting. As he pushed off the floor with his palms and drove his heels into the back of the elevator, the massive quads and hamstrings in his thighs drove him up and into Elena, who had murdered her last believer.... He sailed four feet high and ten feet into the lobby with body folded in two. When he landed, his chest pinned her legs, her torso whiplashed, and her head was crushed flat on the marble floor. (Jenkins 167, 168)

The authors use a great choice of words and phrasing in the sentences, enticing the reader to read on. This allows the story to flow, which in turn continues to captivate the reader's attention. The action and the drama are described so well that the reader may almost feel as if they are a part of the story. In fact, when the action is slow the reader may begin to skim the text, trying to find that next bit of adventure and drama.

I thoroughly enjoyed The Remnant, with its easy reading and captivating action that tells the story of the end times that is prophesied about in The Bible. The way that Jenkins writes with his careful and precise description of the events going on throughout The Remnant, kept me reading for hours on end; before I knew it I was done and I was eager to read on to the next book in the series Armageddon. As a Christian, I have read The Bible for many years trying to glean a little bit of the wisdom that comes from studying both "Old and New Testament". As I'm finishing the "New Testament" my mind always starts to wander. Knowing that reading the last book of The Bible, "The Revelation", I will have many more questions about the content of the book after I have finished, then when I started. The Bible can be a hard book to understand with its many references to the prophecy of the end times, the tribulation, the rapture and the great battle of Armageddon. The Remnant does an excellent job of answering many of these questions with its interpretation of the book of "Revelation".

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## A Girl's First Primer in Feminism

Chloe LaFortuna

Allegra Maude Goldman

Edith Konecky

\$14.95

From an early age, Allegra knew she was different and that other treated her differently. She was, after all, a girl. Allegra Maude Goldman is a coming of age story of a young girl that aspires for more; more than what society had planned for her. Told by her mother that children should be seen and not heard, forced to take baking classes in school and always handed dolls to play with,

Allegra knew that everyone expected her to behave a certain way, however Allegra was prepared to prove them wrong.

Allegra Maude Goldman recently was reprinted as a 25th anniversary edition with a new foreword by Alix Kates Shulman, an introduction by Tillie Olsen and an afterward by Bella Brodzki. It was first printed in 1976. The book, written by Edith Konecky, is one of those stories that is beloved by all who read it. The audience it is intended to appeal to is very clear. Coming of age stories of young girls are best related to by young girls that are coming of age. The story moves easily, the syntax is simple, nothing complicated about any of it. Perfect for a lazy afternoon on the beach; where I read the book cover to cover.

This book is a primer for young girls in lessons of feminism. The issues that Allegra deals with are ones that most pubescent girls take on. The first days of a new school, the dreaded curse, older brothers, summers at camp, first crushes and best friends. The differences between boys and girls is also an issue that Allegra believes needs exploring.

Allegra's awareness of the differences between her and her male counter-parts is uniquely acute. She knows that girls are different than boys, what she questions is why they are treated so differently. For example, she always questioned why she was treated differently than the boys at her school or her brother, David. In a conversation with her mother, Allegra is trying to understand why David is receiving special attention.

“David has to grow up to take his place in the world. I want him to be able

to do that. And to be happy.’

‘Furthermore, how come nobody around here is at all interested in whether I am

finding myself?’

‘Oh you,’ my mother said. ‘You’ll grow up and marry some nice man and have children. David is a boy’ ” (65).

In the era of pre-feminist theory this statement would be accepted, even

expected to be told to a little girl. Being anything other than a wife and

mother was unheard of and unacceptable. Allegra disagreed with her mother. She decided that she needed different role models than her mother and grandmother. Both of whom were devoted housewives and mothers. It was at summer camp that Allegra found the roles models she desired. Strong women that were educated, capable, confident and didn’t need a man around. Allegra quickly adopted these women as her guides.

For the young girls that read this book, Allegra herself, can serve as their role model. Her life lessons can help girls to better understand their own struggles. I can tell how this could very quickly become a young girls favorite book. Much like I loved Nancy Drew and Beverley Cleary books, Allegra Maude Goldman, is sure to be loved by those who read it. The book’s timeless theme transcends generations.

A must read for any girls coming into her own and needing a friend. Allegra becomes that childhood friend, that tells you the secrets, that your mother doesn’t want you to know.

