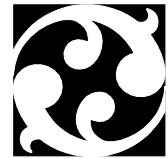




CAMELOT BOOK CLUB



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SOUTH OF BROAD by Pat Conroy

This is the story of a diverse group of teenagers from Charleston, South Carolina who form friendships in the late 1960s. They are a diverse group, some from privileged families, some struggling with their place in life, some black, some white, and a brother and sister who are orphans. A basketball coach, a priest, a store owner, a psychiatrist are also among those who play major roles in Conroy's tale of drama and surprises.

Leo, the protagonist, faced mental collapse when he found his brother's body. His brother had committed suicide and it affected Leo's whole life. When we find out the reason for the suicide, it opens up a whole new world of drama.

There are many sub-plots, with each character experiencing life-changing events. The book is full of surprises, some shocking and macabre, all entertaining reading. It could be described as a "page-turner".

CAMELOT'S DISCUSSION of the book

Author Conroy writes beautifully. And his descriptions of Charleston were so alive for this wonderful town. The characters were all flawed and the book was chock full of surprises, with lots of foul language thrown in. We all were drawn to Leo King, the inept and unattractive one. As a teenager, he was attracted to Starla; as an adult he married her, the wayward orphan who tended to wander off for months at a time. We were glad at Leo's good fortune at inheriting a home and wealth from his mentor, Harrington Cannon.



CAMELOT COMMENTS

- ◆ I felt sorry for Leo - he tried to keep the group together.
- ◆ Couldn't figure out why Leo married Starla.
- ◆ Enjoyed the first half, glad I read it. However, this wasn't as good as Conroy's previous books.
- ◆ Ditto.
- ◆ Ditto.
- ◆ Really enjoyed the first half, will finish it.
- ◆ Makes you want to go and visit Charleston again. I enjoyed the book, didn't like the slams on the Catholic Church.
- ◆ I'm looking forward to reading it.
- ◆ Some parts were very contrived. And some language was unacceptable.
- ◆ The stories of each character were full of intrigue - some rather unbelievable. I like Conroy's style, with lots of dialogue. His characters come alive because of his graphic descriptions. Really enjoyed the book, except for the foul language.

MEETING NOTES

Peaches was our hostess for the meeting in her charming cottage. We helped her celebrate her 90th birthday with the wonderful banana cake Ann F. had made for her.

Once again, we updated each other on happenings in our lives. ---**Gwen** had dental woes - lost a filling. But good stuff, finished her version of history for the El Dorado web page. ---**Karen** just returned from a wonderful 10-day cruise with a friend to Greece, Italy, Turkey, and more. So beautiful; Greece like a painting; described a robbery of her wallet which was strapped inside her purse. Brought back book-marks as gifts for all. ---**Peaches** is having her 90th birthday - received an autographed photo of George Jones, whom she loves. ---**Sue** helped daughter Carrie get settled in her new condo hanging curtains Sue made for her. Then off to Chicago to baby-sit. ---**Ann F.** reported that her daughter Susie got a nice promotion at her job in Austin. ---**Ann Seher** had great news - she spent two weeks in a Winnsboro hospital facility to help adjust her meds, observe, and receive on-going assistance. She has been free of anxiety since then. ---**Anne's** only grandchild, Brad, one of the cutest boys in the world, is moving and will take his parents with him. She's glad to be tutoring a little boy after her retirement from teaching. ---**Barbara** has early Thanksgiving plans with her family. ---**Robin** shared her sorrow at losing Eric's father, and reported that Jackson, the miracle child, is doing well at 16 months old. ---**Peggy/Margaret** displayed photos of her daughter Kristen and K's husband, Joe, in their creative Hallowe'en costumes, and also photos of two brand-new great grand-children.

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NEXT MEETING

When? Friday, December 18, 2009, 1:30p.m.

Where? At Robin Westerheim's house

Why? To have fun, and to discuss our November selection,
(to be determined by Robin Westerheim)

Note: In the **January** meeting, we'll hear reviews of the books which each reader has chosen.

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Quote of the Day

Pain and suffering is inevitable but misery is optional.

CAMELOT BOOK CLUB IS GREAT

