



October 25, 2006

Good Afternoon,

It was good to see you Monday night. We had a heartfelt discussion of Joan Didion's book The Year of magical Thinking. We discussed the many ways people grieve and agreed this would not be a self-help book but was well written and gave cause for consideration and thought. From the reviews I read Didion has often written books where the themes have been bereavement and loss. She admits there is no amount of preparation that allows one to easily adjust when a beloved family member or friend dies. Thanks to all of you who shared your thoughts and feelings with the group.

Donna was unable to be here but she sent in her review:

I enjoyed The Year of Magical Thinking. I thought it was interesting to see how the sudden loss of his presence and companionship affected her. I can't imagine how difficult it must be for people who have spent literally all their time together to suddenly find themselves alone. I think you see that in long-married couples in general, but added in the fact that basically her entire adult working life was involved with her husband must have made it even more difficult for her. Most people have time away from each other; they experience themselves as separate at times, not always together. Her description of how she would check his calendar to see what they had been doing that day a year ago was moving, as was her realization on the day after his one year anniversary, that one year ago, she had no memory of what the two of them had been doing, etc. since he had not lived to see December 31. I think she finally began moving on at this point. Also, I think her ability to move on was hindered by the fact that she had so many worries about her daughter's health problems. I was also struck by how she sought comfort in books and writings about grief and mourning, yet didn't seem to turn to religion for it at all. It was almost as if she needed to see what she was supposed to be doing to grieve "properly". I think you could see her moving through the stages of grief that you always hear about.

We welcome newcomer Karin LaChance to the group.

Our next meeting will be Monday November 27 at 7:30. The title for November's discussion is The Master Butcher's Singing Club written by Louise Erdrich. I will be looking for a host for December's dinner meeting. If you are interested in opening your home please contact me and I will be happy to discuss the details of this fun night. Our December meeting date will be Monday December 18 at 6:30.

Books we discussed:

Jeanne	Wild Swans	Chang
Becky	Marley and Me Water for Elephants	Grogan Gruen
Louise	Here's the Church, Here's the Steeple Shadow Warriors	Pagel Copek
JoAnne	Murder in Mellingham	Oleksiw
Karin	My Sister's Keeper Good In Bed	Piccoult Weiner
Mary	Ted and Sylvia I Feel Bad About My Neck	Tennant Ephron
Heather	Blue Shoes and Happiness Something About America	McCall Smith Testa
Kathy	Truman Star of the Sea	McCullough O'Connor
Mabel	Lydia Cassatt Reading the Morning Paper Strapless: John Singer Sargent	Chessman Davis
Nancy	Mayflower At the Villa of Reduced Circumstances	Philbrick McCall Smith
Dawn	Mayflower The Thirteenth Tale	Philbrick Steeple
Ann Ginches	Devil in the White City The Hours	Larson Cunningham
Maureen	The Great Bridge	McCullough
Anne Smith	The Ice Queen	Hoffman
Marie	All Souls	MacDonald

Have a Happy Halloween, come in and vote for your favorite costume worn by NPL staff!

My Best,
Becky

