

## *And these might be considered classics some day.... (cont'd.)*

***Gilead*** by Marilynne Robinson (2)

F Robi

Set in a small town in Iowa in the 1950's. An elderly minister is writing a letter to his young son. Poignant and spiritual.

***The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao*** by Junot Diaz (2)\*

F Diaz

This is the story of a young man of Dominican descent. He is living in New Jersey. He adores comic books, fantasy, and has dreams of true love. Simply brilliant.

***The Lazarus Project*** by Aleksandar Hemon (3)\*

F Hemo (at WB only)

100 years ago in Chicago an immigrant was killed by the Chief of Police. The author has taken this historical event and created a novel of dazzling depth.

***Europe Central*** by William T. Vollmann (5)\*

F Voll

Another World War Two book. This is the most complicated book on my list. A worthy read by one of our most gifted American writers. Not an easy book to read. You have to earn this one.

***River of Darkness*** by Rennie Airth (3)

F Airt (at WB only)

There has to be at least one murder mystery on my desert island. I picked this one because it is one of the best ones I have read in the past ten years.

***White Doves at Morning*** by James Lee Burke (2)

F Burk

Burke is one of our greatest literary stylists. This book is one of his least known. It is also one of his best. A Civil War theme.

***The Yiddish Policemen's Union*** by Michael Chabon (3)

F Chab

Watch out for this author. He can do it all. This is an alternate history. Imagine that the State of Israel fizzled out and all the Jews who fled Europe for Israel ended up in Alaska instead. Delightful, wacky, and it is a crime novel, too!

***The Shadow of the Wind*** by Carlos Ruiz Zafon (2)

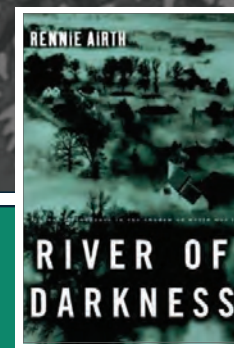
F Zafo

Set in Barcelona between the Great Wars. Atmospheric, haunting, a book lover's dream. The author is an up and coming talent.

***The Russian Debutante's Handbook*** by Gary Shteyngart (3)\*

F Shte

This literary debut is not well known. The author has an amazing sense of humor. Another sleeper. Amusing, rewarding, cerebral.



# Vick's Picks

*Great Selections by Vick Mickunas,  
Book Reviewer for the Dayton Daily News*

Join the 2010 Great Books Challenge by reading 12 books  
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Congratulations to the Washington-Centerville Public Library for 200 years of service to the community.

I have been asked to compile a list of my favorite books with the hope that library patrons might wish to peruse some of them during this bicentennial year of 2010.

I make no claims that these are the 25 best books ever written. Half of them are recognized as classics. The other half are books that might be considered classics some day. These are all works of fiction, the products of pure imagination.

If I was ever stranded on that imaginary desert island these are the books that I would want to have with me.

I'll list the classics first. Most of these books are well known and require no introduction. The second half of the list is more contemporary so I have made a few comments about these lesser known works.

Please note that I'll also provide a numerical rating for each book between 1 and 5. The more difficult books will have the higher numbers. An asterisk (\*) indicates books with "mature" subject matter. Thanks, for reading!

Vick Mickunas  
Book Reviewer  
The Dayton Daily News



All items are at both locations unless otherwise noted. To find out if titles are available in large print or audio, or for download, check eCatalog or ask a librarian.

## The CLASSICS

**Great Expectations** by Charles Dickens (1)  
F Dick

**Pride and Prejudice** by Jane Austen (1)  
F Aust

**Jane Eyre** by Charlotte Brontë (1)  
F Bron

**Wuthering Heights** by Emily Brontë (1)  
F Bron

**Don Quixote** by Miguel de Cervantes (3)  
F Cerv

**The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn** by Mark Twain (1)  
JF Twai and YAF Twai



## The CLASSICS, cont'd.

**Moby Dick** by Herman Melville (2)  
F Melv

**Nineteen Eighty-Four** by George Orwell (2)  
F Orwe

**One Hundred Years of Solitude** by Gabriel Garcia Marquez (4)  
F Garc

**Gargantua et Pantagruel (Gargantua and Pantagruel)**  
by Francois Rabelais (3)  
843.3 Rabe (at CV only)

**The Magic Mountain** by Thomas Mann (4)  
F Mann

**Fahrenheit 451** by Ray Bradbury (1)  
F Brad

**Catcher in the Rye** by J.D. Salinger (2)  
F Sali

## And these might be considered classics some day....

**Life and Fate** by Vasily Grossman (2)  
F Gros

The author was a Soviet war correspondent during World War Two. An incredible book based on the epic struggle between Germany and the USSR.

**Call it Sleep** by Henry Roth (2)  
F Roth (at WB only)

This is one of the great unknown books. A powerful tale about a young immigrant fighting to survive in the slums of New York 100 years ago.

**Shantaram** by Gregory David Roberts (3)  
F Robe

The author was a bank robber in Australia. He began writing this book in prison. Fiction is often informed by genuine experiences. An amazing story.