

Sept 07 SUMMARY – Honeymoon With My Brother by Wisner

The third book discussion for the Travel Lovers Book Club was last night. Small but mighty, Judie lead the discussion with Willie, Barb and myself about the book HONEYMOON WITH MY BROTHER. Judie had also received input from our currently Russian located representatives, Keith and Phylliss.

The general feeling of those attending was while the book was enjoyable; the author did not go very deep into the general travel experience and cultures visited. At times, readers found their minds wandering or felt unspoken impatience about his belaboring the loss of his relationship. While the title implies a travel adventure, most of the readers felt the book dealt more with sibling relationships and how the brothers evolved and changed over the span of 2.5 years.

One area where the readers felt the book had real depth and insight was in the postcard correspondence with the 98 year-old relative. Phylliss wondered how many travelers today would take the time for that type of detailed correspondence with an elderly relative. Another area where the author became introspective was in the final chapter of each continent. It was here where he recapped the places visited and the lessons learned.

Another topic that hit home with the group was the concept of the "ugly traveler". You may remember the brother were joined part way through their trip by friends from a previous chapter. The brothers had a little bit of "this is our trip and you're horning in" and they also exhibited a lack of tolerance of any criticism of the current local or people. The brothers felt that they were allowed to whine, but not the interlopers. The brother also had a related experience when they returned home and found that it was difficult to relate to people and tell them about their trip. The members attending last share that they had experienced similar situations when they spoke to non-travel oriented family, friends and neighbors.

Another area that developed into a lively discussion was the author's suggestion to not use guidebooks. Admittedly at times, you do find a location where a lot of people are carrying the same book, but on a whole, the group felt that guidebooks have their place. If used as a starting point instead of the bible, they allow the savvy traveler to ask better questions when they arrive in a location. It was also pointed out that they could offer invaluable advice to a first time traveler into a location where they have little previous knowledge. The special passes that are available to travelers prior to arriving in a country (Brit Rail Pass and Brazil pass) are

wonderful resources for the well-planned traveler. The group felt that by using them wisely and judiciously, that they can add value to a trip.

Another topic discussed was the importance of family and community in foreign cultures, especially South America and Africa and how when you travel on a budget, you have a greater chance of truly interacting with people in the local community.

Thanks to everyone who participated last night.

Our next meeting will be on Monday, October 8 from 5:30-7:00 with Keith leading the book BREAKING THE LIMIT by Karen Larsen. The book is in hardback and should be available at local libraries. I did not order in books at the Tattered Cover for this meeting. If you will be unable to attend, please email Keith at Keithphylliss@msn.com with your comments.

Keith also asked that for those that are planning to attend, please go to Google and search for the author, Karen Larsen. There is an interesting article under the listing of peacecorpswriters.org.

I will miss the next meeting, but I will see you in November. We will begin to draft the list of books the group wants to read from February to July of 2008. I will circulate the list to the entire group and we will vote on the titles at the December meeting. Please research the book that you would like lead for the second 6 months of our first year as the Travel Lovers Book Club.

Happy Reading!

Jane