

Feb 08 SUMMARY – EAT, PRAY, LOVE by Gilbert

Our numbers increased at the Feb 11 meeting. 22 people attended the meeting and we had to keep bringing in more chairs. Luckily there was a book signing following our meeting so there were plenty available.

Eat, Pray, Love by Elizabeth Gilbert was the book this month lead by Rose. During our meeting we learned that the author will be at the Paramount on April 6th. Apparently she also has a second book out entitled, WEDDINGS AND OTHER EVICTIONS.

Rose led us off and the early conversation got everyone talking. While not generally fond of the book, she persevered as she was leading the book. By some it was felt that the book was not really a travel book. Some of group got tired of the authors whining and did not empathize with her on her quest. We found quickly that while there were some that disagreed with her points, many were very much fans of the book.

The themes that developed during our discussion ranged from spiritual quests, how do we describe and accept pleasure, what draws us to a book, what is a travel book, and words that describe a city or a person.

There was a long conversation about her seeking pleasure in various forms and what that really means. Some of the group felt it was unhealthy for Liz to gain 20 pounds in Italy, yet another person indicated she was probably just coming back up to her weight from the weight she lost during the end of her marriage. It was pointed out that food is the one of the safest pleasures available and is very often sought during a time of crisis or despair.

One person brought up that while she did travel alone, it wasn't really that much a stretch or a risk for her as she had a book commitment and was being paid to travel and gather information. It was pointed out that while many of us say that we long for that type of adventure, we never quite give ourselves permission to follow through. Someone pointed out that if it really is your goal, you make it happen,

There was quite a bit of discussion around the spiritual journey and awakening for the author. One reader felt that each of the three stages of the book took her from being very narcissistic (Italy), through wanting to connect with people (India), to finally being able to step outside herself and wanting to help others (Indonesia). I personally loved the honesty of the book in places such as the angry conversation with God and her feeling

about some personal things. Very brave to put some of that in writing. I also adored the cosmic switch she faced in India when she at last decided to be quiet and focus on meditation to be told the next day that she was "Suzy welcoming committee" for all the other pilgrims.

The question was asked, why did we read this book? What made us reach for it? Several readers had heard about it on Oprah, others were handed the book by someone who recommended it, while others had heard the buzz and were drawn to it. I personally wanted to read it because it was about a woman traveling alone around the world.

Some in the group felt she complained quite a bit in the beginning and belabored her unhappiness. Others felt while she spent some time in unhappiness, she never really dumped on her husband. A side story from one attendee, who has a close association to someone who knows the author personally, said that her marriage was not happy, as it ended the husband became increasingly unreasonable and when all was said in down, she simply wanted out.

From our Maryland member, Curt, this arrived after the meeting. *When the author is funny she is really funny. When depressing she is really depressing.*

Sometimes the humor and the depression are linked like on page 15 where she is addressing God. I laughed at what her friend Suzi said in --something like " I like it here so much I can't wait to come back. Gilbert said she should be able to enjoy it now!

I think my favorites in this book are meeting the characters Gilbert met like the Italian twins, Richard from Texas and Tulsi in India. I was so relieved when on the Minaret in the Ashram, Gilbert let loose of her husband in the "conversation" she had with him. She crossed over that time. Attraversiamo.

It was brought up by one new member that everyone needs at least one crazy woman friend in their lives which got many of us thinking about who was our one crazy friend and if there was only one for each of us.

A mixed and varied discussion and our thanks to everyone who came, whether you contributed or not.

Willie brought up that Lonely Planet has a new book out called

EXPERIMENTAL TRAVEL - where you go to focus on one theme, or take it to the extreme and visit a country blindfolded. Similar to the Art of Pilgrimage, you can use these exercises to more fully experience a daily occurrence such as a common household chore, or take it all the way to an around the world adventure.

Again for the newcomers, another great group is the Budget Treasures Travel Club that meets at Ross U-Hills Library, 4310 E. Amherst, Denver 80222. For further information contact Willie Pusede at 303-758-9213, wpusede@hotmail.com or www.budgettreasurestravelclub.com.

To all the new members, the Travel Lovers Book Club says a big WELCOME! We look forward to seeing you next time.

Jane Stanfield
Where Is She Heading
303-988-1356
wiladyjanes@gmail.com
www.janestanfieldwish.com