



Boston Authors Club

March 2021 Newsletter

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CURRENTLY READING: Interview with Peter Reynolds



Peter H. Reynolds is the owner of The Blue Bunny Books & Toys, and an acclaimed writer, storyteller, and illustrator behind multiple creative projects, including the three books in his "Creatrilogy" - The Dot, Ish and Sky Color. He enjoys in-person and virtual speaking engagements, championing "off the path" learning, everyday creativity, and inspiring children and "grown up" children to lead successful and meaningful lives.

Peter and his twin brother Paul founded the award-winning children's media company, FableVision, which uses storytelling and technology to create positive programming and products to help all learners navigate their full potential. Peter and

Paul also launched the Reynolds Center for Teaching, Learning, and Creativity (RCTLC). The center is a nonprofit organization that encourages creativity and innovation in teaching and learning.

1) What are you reading right now?

Nothing to See Here by Kevin Wilson. People are sometimes surprised that children's book authors actually read books for adults, but it does happen! In this case, the book happens to be ABOUT children, but it's far from a fairy tale.

2) What inspired you to pick up this title?

I'd read Kevin Wilson's previous book, **The Family Fang** which was a quirky delight. When I read the description of this new title, I was sold. Being a twin myself, this sentence on the back of the book grabbed me: "Lillian is to be their caretaker. However, there is a catch: the twins spontaneously combust when agitated, flames igniting from their skin in a startling but beautiful way."

3) What is your impression of the book so far?

I often say, tell me a story I haven't heard before. Children bursting into flame as their anxiety is raised, being taken care of by a nanny who isn't fond of children, is a recipe for some captivating storytelling. It's a bit nerve-wracking to read, but I can't wait to see how this unfolds.

4) Please feel free to give us a star rating from 1-5 (5 being the best).

I'm going to go with a solid 5. Creative, moving and original.

Interview by Kate Farrell

authors!
AUTHORS!

For inclusion in the April Newsletter, send your events, news, and publications by 3/30/21 to bostonauthorsclub@gmail.com
THANKS!



Mary J. Cronin is facilitating two free programs on Family Story and Memoir writing in March

You are cordially invited to take part in one of these free Zoom sessions for an engaging hour of discussion and practice in writing stories based on family memories. Hosted by [Write the World](#).

Tuesday, March 23 at 7:00 PM - 8:00 PM EDT
and
Tuesday, March 30 at 7:00 PM - 8:00 PM EDT

For a registration link, email mary@writetheworld.com

President's Note

March Musings

One of the classes I teach at Tufts is a course called "Creating Children's Media." The purpose of the course is to give students some experience in making various kinds of media for kids. They learn how to write a script for children's television program. They try their hands at writing a proposal for a kids' educational app. And they get training in how to make a Hollywood-style pitch for turning a children's book into a movie.

In order to prepare for this assignment, we spend a lot of time talking about what some of the differences are between books and the films that sometimes come from them. I ask my students to think about questions like, if children see the movie before they read the book, to what extent do those images take shape in their minds? (If kids saw the Harry Potter movies before reading the book, would Harry only look like Daniel Radcliffe?) And if children read the book before they see the movie, to what extent do they hold the movie responsible for staying true to the book? (When I brought my kids to see the first Harry Potter, we left the theater and my daughter announced, "Mommy, they made 40 mistakes in that movie!")

With streaming services hungry for content, more books than ever are not only getting optioned, but made into films. This is good news for authors. But is it good news for audiences? Will people want to read the book if they've seen the movie first?

The research to date suggests that they will. Movies often inspire people to read the books on which they are based. Entrepreneurial publishers and agents increasingly try to leverage television or film versions of book properties to get new editions put out (sometimes with photos of the stars of a film on the cover) or at least, additional printings. In the world of children's media, having a tv show or a movie made from a



book almost always increases book sales and demand for the books in libraries.

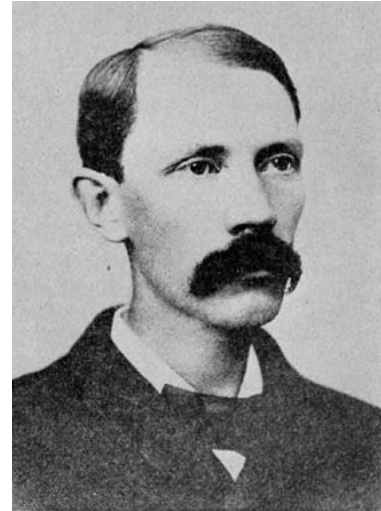
I recently watched "Nomadland" on Hulu – a fabulous film that will no doubt end up winning a number of awards. But one of my big takeaways from the film is that I now want to go read Jessica Bruder's book, on which it's based. I'm sure that some of the gorgeous cinematography from Chloe Zhao's film will still be in my mind's eye as I read the book, but I also look forward to the other images that will form from the text.

Wishing you all happy reading and good viewing!

Julie Dobrow
BAC President

Yesteryear at the BAC by Scott Guthery: Preaching and Dime Novel Projects

A thumbnail biography in Volume II of Members of the Boston Authors Club leads off with "John Harvey Whitson ... was admitted to the Authors Club when he was almost fifty and no longer writing so-called 'dime-novels,' but other works of fiction." Another author's soul saved! No more books like 'Barbara, A Woman of the West' for John after he joined the BAC. I wonder if he would have been stripped of his typewriter ribbons if he had been seen sending a manuscript to Pluck and Luck.



It's unlikely that Whitson would have been caught however, since he wrote his early works under a long list of pseudonyms; "Lieut. A. K. Sims" for Beadle's *Dime and Half-Dime Libraries*, "Luke Garland" in Midwestern newspapers, "Maurice Stevens" for the Jack Lightfoot series, "Robert Steel" for the Tom Wright stories, and on and on. In a double pseudonym twist, Beadle and Adams republished his "Lieut. A.K. Sims" novels as books written by "Colonel Hazelton."

It's not at all clear how Whitson ended up in Boston and knocking on the door of the Boston Authors Club around the turn of the twentieth century. A few clues from his biography are that he was ordained as a Baptist minister in 1898, at the age of 44, then spent two years preaching in western Massachusetts. He married Flora Josselyn in Cambridge in 1900 and turned to writing for Sunday school papers and *The Young People's Weekly*. After thirty years of preaching, teaching, and writing in Tennessee and Missouri, he retired to Rowley, Massachusetts, where he died in 1936.

In his Rowley retirement years, according to the [Beadle and Adams Dime Novel Digitization Project at Northern Illinois University](#), Whitson started a Bureau of Criticism for Writers. I can't find any details about the Bureau of Criticism, and this may be all for the good. It seems that there are more than sufficient sources of criticism today for those of us who persist in writing. I do, however, wonder if the *Dime Novel Project* is accepting applications for 2021 summer interns.

MORE Virtual Author Talks in March

Renée Kurilla Live on Crowdcast on Sunday, March 7th at 4pm

An Unlikely Story Bookstore & Café hosts a special storytime presentation, celebrating the charming new picture book *One Springy, Singy Day!* In this virtual event, local Boston author and illustrator Renée Kurilla will read her vibrant and joyful picture book, about a diverse cast of children as they play throughout their day. Sign up for free at www.anunlikelystory.com/event/ren%C3%A9e-kurilla

Ali Benjamin Live on Crowdcast on Wednesday, March 10th at 7pm

National Book Award finalist and internationally bestselling author Ali Benjamin joins An Unlikely Story Bookstore & Café for a virtual event to celebrate her first adult novel, *The Smash-Up*, a timely story about a marriage facing the cultural, political, and social challenges of our day. This sharp, fresh novel, inspired by a classic Edith Wharton novella, is a moving portrait of a family in distress and a powerful exploration of how the things we fail to notice can shatter a family, a community, and a nation.. Sign up for free at www.anunlikelystory.com/event/ali-benjamin

Ruth Druart Live on Crowdcast on Thursday, March 11th at 1pm

Spend your lunch hour tuned into a special virtual event with debut author Ruth Druart. During the event, Ruth will be streaming LIVE from the City of Lights and discussing the inspiration for her new historical

fiction novel, *While Paris Slept*. The events of World War II are the backdrop for this story of a young Jewish woman in Paris on a train bound for Auschwitz, and the man she entrusts her most precious possession to. When two destinies become intertwined, the choices each person makes will change the future in ways neither could have imagined. Sign up for free at www.anunlikelystory.com/event/ruth-druart

NOTE: The BAC News welcomes virtual author event listings from Boston-area independent bookstores. Send April author event highlights and registration information to bostonauthorsclub@gmail.com

Become a member for 2021!

Membership dues are \$50 annually for the calendar year. You can join and renew online by [clicking here](#). If you would rather pay by check, please make your check out to Boston Authors Club and mail it to the following address:

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