

Over the years I have read many great books which have sparked my interest and stimulated my mind. When I find a book I enjoy I tend to run with the author until his style of writing grows old, or until ive read them all. While most of the books I have read some extraordinary books there have been some that have made me want to shoot my self in the face (metaphorically no need to worry). I am currently reading Homer's Iliad for enjoyment and in school I am reading Shakespeare's Hamlet both of which I truly enjoy. My personal favorite and I believe under appreciated book of all time was the WWI book All Quiet on the Western Front by Erich M. Remarque.

As a boy I found that I enjoyed reading. Books such as Wayside School series by Louis Sacher, and Maniac McGee were the first books I read. I then began to read the books by Mark Twain including the beginning of the one about being a cowboy. Through middle school I began to read books by S. E. Hinton starting with Outsiders and That Was Then This Is Now and ending with the book Rumble Fish. I read many others over Elementary and Middle School, most of which I can't remember the name or the plot (including one which was a modern version of king Midas with chocolate instead of gold). My favorite books of middle school were Bridge To Teribetheia as well as The Wonderful Wizard of Oz.

High School holds my favorite and most memorable selection of books to date probably cause it's the most recent. In my Freshman years I went through a Tolkien stage in which I read almost every one of his books including Unfinished Tales put together by his son Christopher Tolkien. I have in many ways yet to recover from this phase I was even one of those nerds who dressed in Middle-Earth clothing to the release of Two Towers. Directly after that and contributing greatly to my "Aura of nerd" I read all of the

Harry Potter books. After that I read the book One Flew Over The Coo-coo's Nest which sparked my interest in human psyche. Instantly my sister recommended Clockwork Orange which I enjoyed though I found the English a little difficult. My search for insanity led me to the short stories written by the great Baltimore citizen Edgar Allan Poe (personal favorite The Pendulum). Following like a stream I quickly picked up several of the beautiful works of Stephen King, I started with Pet Semetary and included It, and Cristean. Over the summer and beginning of my senior year I started to read books about the world famous British Secret Agent James Bond, ranging from both Ian Fleming's You Only Live Twice, Live And Let Die, and Casino Royal and John Gardner's License Renewed, and Never Send Flowers. I am currently reading Homer's Iliad with the help of a book called Mythology by Edith Hamilton and Clifnotes, I was inspired to read this book after watching the movie O' Brother Where Art Thou which is based off the Odyssey but I want to read them in order. During the school year I have been assigned many other books several that I had already read (One Flew over the Coo-coo's Nest) and others I had to read for the first time (Hamlet, Turn of the Screw)

My history with books has covered a wide spectrum from deliciously appetizing books to god awful. Probably the worst series of books I read was by Salvatore, I found that each one got worse. His characters seemed to be unrealistic and dull and his plots were poorly planned, worst of all was his depiction of sex which was so appalling he would unintentionally make your stomach turn. His writing got so annoying that reading him was no longer leisure and became a chore. Another book that caused severe insanity was Huxley's Brave New World which I had to read as my senior thesis, I absolutely despised

this book much for the same reason I hated Salvator's books also I found he truly lacked detail making the picture in my head foggy and unclear.

One of my favorite books which I have read in recent years is Erich Maria Remarque's All Quiet on the Western Front, this book to me that in inhumane times it is the humanity or comradeship between men that pulls them thru it. Paul the main character forms a bond with the other men in his troop that can't be broken even in their deaths. In the first or second chapter the men lie looking at the sky betting on a dog fight between two enemy planes not caring if their side won or not. To me the best and purest symbol of comradeship came in the form of the man named Kat, Kat would always provide for his buddies. The friendship between Paul and Kat shows when they go to steal a goose Kat was looked upon as an older brother by most of the men. When Paul returns home for a brief time he feels out of place all he desires is to be back with his friends, he realizes that the life he led before the war was totally different to the person he had become.

These books which I have read have permanently affected my views and outlook on life and many reflect my own personality. The books mentioned in these pages aren't the only ones I have read but they are either favorites or highly memorable.