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Work-in-Progress

Author Leslie Pietrzyk explores the creative process and all things literary.

MONDAY, JANUARY 19, 2009

The Continuing Problem of Half-Read Books

I'm not the only one who worries about half-read books. **Becky Wolsk**, a wonderful writer from one of my novel workshops at the Writer's Center, sent these excellent suggestions for how to cope with the angst of the book that can't be finished:

"Your post [last week] strikes a chord because like you, I maintain a record of all the books I read, and it makes me reluctant to dump out of a book that I'm slogging through instead of enjoying. Here's how I dump out of it anyway:

- 1) If you don't like it or see something useful in it by the 100th page, dump out.
- 2) In my book journal, I write "dumped out of xxxx by xxxx." That way, I have a record that I was interested in it. Because my book journal is not just a list of accomplishment, so to speak, but also a way I can document where I was steering my reading life for that year.
- 3) Instead of saying, "I'm not going to finish this book," consider saying, "I've now read enough to transfer this book over to #857 on my Books I Want to Read list. That means, I'll get back to it at some point, maybe, but it's not really on my radar screen anymore.

Books that bore me are like boring friends. I may decide, from now on, that I will white-lie my way out of getting together with them."

Posted by Leslie at 7:14 AM

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