

# BOOK BAG

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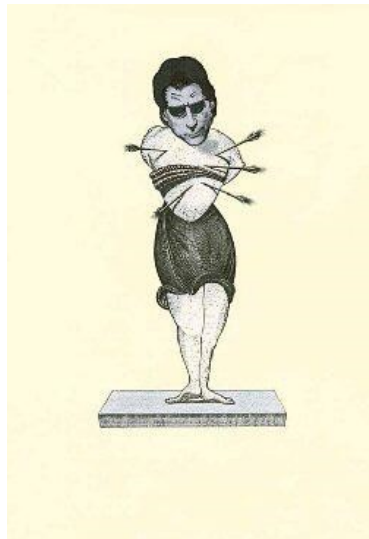
May 2015



## Richard Lewis' new book

Denise I. O'Neal

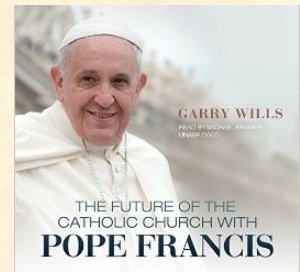
Words such as “brilliantly warped” and “most influential humorists” have been used to describe Richard Lewis, who arrives in town in support of his book *Reflections from Hell: Richard Lewis' Guide on How Not to Live* (powerHouse Books) with illustrations by Carl Nicholas Titolo and forward by Larry David, 6:30 p.m. May 12, City Winery, 1200 W. Randolph.



The event, hosted by Printers Row and the Book Stall, provides a new audience for Lewis to share his reflections and dark humor, which zeroes in on the comedian's life-long, self-debasing standup routines. Tickets are \$28; \$47, includes a copy of the book.

### tribnation

Lewis, recognized as one of the top 50 stand-up comedians of all time by Comedy Central, will also hold three shows during his visit: May 13-14, Zanies Chicago; May 15, Zanies Rosemont. [zanies](#)



## Evanston literary event

Local authors Garry Willis and Richard Cahan hold discussions of their books during the Evanston Literary Festival, May 11-18 at the Evanston Public Library, 1703 Orrington, Evanston.

Pulitzer Prize-winning author Willis talks about his book “The Future of the Catholic Church with Pope Francis,” 7 p.m. May 13. Books will be available for purchase and signing.

Former Chicago Sun-Times Photo editor and co-author of “Vivian Maier: Out of the Shadows,” among others, talks about his body of works, 7 p.m. May 18.

Both events are free and open to the public. However, registration is suggested for both events. [evanston-publiclibrary](#)

## May 2015 releases:

The **Ables**, Jeremy Scott (Contemporary): May 2015

**Anything Could Happen**, Will Walton (Contemporary): May 26

**A Court of Thorn Roses**, Sarah J. Mass (Children): May 5

The **Book of Phoenix**, Nnedi Okorafor, (Futuristic): May 5

**Born of Defiance**, Sherrilyn Kenyon (Paranormal) May 12

**Church of Marvels**, Leslie Parry, (Contemporary): May 5

**Delicious!**, Ruth Reichl (Women's Fiction): May 12

**Familiar: Volume 1: One Rainy Day in May**, Mark Z. Danielewski, (Contemporary): May 12)

**Fell of Dark**, Patrick Downes (Young Adult): May 2015

**50 Ways to Ruin a Rake**, Jade Lee (Historical Romance): May 5

**Fire & Chasm**, Chelsea M. Campbell (Fantasy): May 1

**14th Deadly Sin**, James Patterson/Maxine Paetro (Thriller): May 4

**Her Wild Hero**, Paige Tyler, (Romantic Suspense): May 5

**Luckiest Girl Alive**, Jessica Knoll (Women's Fiction): May 12

**Maximum Ride Forever**, James Patterson (Maximum Ride, #9): May 18

**One Night in Winter**, Simon Sebag Montefiore (Epic Love ): May 2015

**Radiant Angel**, Nelson DeMille, (Thriller): May 26

**Resistant**, Michael Palmer (Thriller): May 5

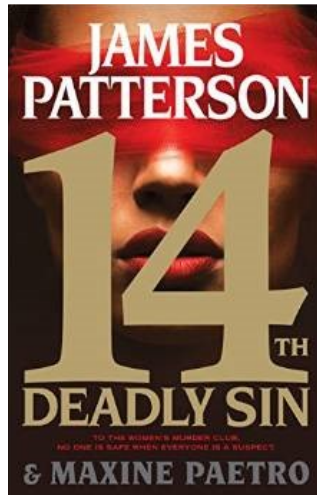
**Waterloo: The History of Four Days, Three Armies ,and Three Battles**, George R.R. Martin (Nonfiction/History): May 5

What a lass Wants, Rowan Keats (Claimed by the Highlander series): May 5

**Yield: A Legal Affairs Story**, Sawyer Bennett (Cal and Macy, #3) May 5

**You're the Kind of Girl I Write Songs About**, Daniel Herborn (Contemporary): May 1

**Your Band Sucks: What I Saw at Indie Rock's Failed Revolution (But Can No Longer Hear)**, Jon Fine (Memoir): May 19



## Comic corner

DC's Converge. What is it? It's such a confusing concept that DC devoted a blog to explain.

Tim Beedle's [Convergence 101: A New Reader's](#)

[Guide](#), states up front, is mainly for those new to the world of DC Comics explains it's really not that difficult to follow.

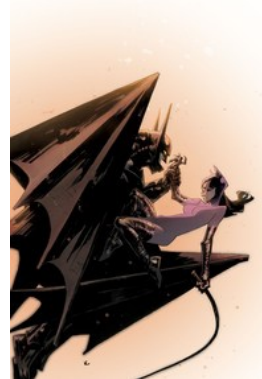
If you went in your local comic book retailer last month and realized the DC titles didn't look familiar that's because the regular books are on hiatus. Say what?

It's not as complicated as it sounds. DC Comics has replaced all of its regular titles with two-issue miniseries and one weekly Convergence title for several months.

The titles revisit characters that have popped up through the decades, some going back 30-40 years.

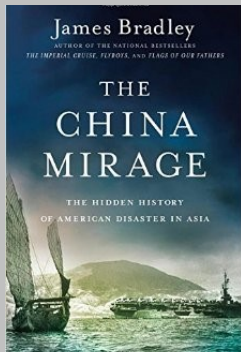
Whether new, old or picking up your first DC comic Beedle insists all readers will be able to follow and enjoy these titles. After all, they're the same faces just from another period.

May titles include Convergence Adventures of Superman #2 (May 20); Convergence Aquaman #2 (May 13); and Convergence Catwoman #2 (May 13, pictutred). Click [here](#) for all May titles.





## Book it:



James Bradley discusses his book *The China Mirage*, 7 p.m. May 4, Anderson's Book Shop, 123 W. Jefferson, Naperville. **andersons**

### Storytelling open mic

Literary Chicago's North Side Story Club, 4000 N. Sheridan hosts a nonfiction storytelling session delivered in an open mic forum, 7:30 p.m. May 7. **literarychicago**

### Garrett on mid-life

Actor, comedian Brad Garrett, best known as Ray Barone's big



brother Robert, in "Everybody Loves Raymond" holds two signings for his new book "When the Balls Drop," 11:30 a.m. May 8, The Standard Club, 320 S. Plymouth and 7 p.m. May 8, Hollywood Palms Cinema, 352 S RT 58, Naperville. **andersons**

Panache Publishing News Service

## The Classics Revisited

Diane L. LaFonte

### *The Diary of a Young Girl*

Who is Anne Frank? She is the single-most famous non-military person on any front whose name is indelibly connected to the reign of Nazi Germany. Frank's journal of her life in Nazi-occupied Germany and Amsterdam at the onset of and during World War II, is one of the most revered accounts of German Jewish life during Hitler's rise. Frank died during interment at Bergen-Belsen concentration camp in 1945.



Frank was born June 12, 1929 in Frankfurt, Germany. In 1933, the year the Nazi's gained control of Germany, Frank's family moved to Amsterdam. In 1940 the family, trapped in the Netherlands as Germany now occupied the area, went into hiding.

While in hiding, June 12, 1942 to August 1, 1944, Frank kept a diary, which she planned to have published as a book after the war. Unfortunately, Anne's family was captured in February 1945. Anne and her sister Margot were taken to Bergen-Belsen concentration camp, where at age 15, she died, most likely from typhus, in February or March of 1945, just weeks before the camp was liberated.

Frank's famous diary, published posthumously in 1947, has become a dateline for the atrocities Germany's Jewish population endured during the period now known as the Holocaust, the most catastrophic incident associated with the war.

Frank's heart wrenching yet horrifying accounts provide readers with insight into a world where monsters are not just in fairy tales but are alive in man's heart, manifesting as bigotry, hate and violence perpetrated against their fellow man.

In spite, or perhaps more appropriate despite, of the disturbing circumstances by which Frank was forced to exist, she manages to remain optimistic, creative and loving, providing candid, compelling stories of the plight of her family and their neighbors during one of the worst periods in history.

When dissent begins in their home country Anne's father, Otto, moves his family to Amsterdam, setting up a business, which will also play a role in the family's survival. Arriving before the German occupation of the Netherlands

**Continued on back**



the Frank patriarch thinks his family has escaped the war. That reality is shattered when the Nazis begin occupying the country May 10, 1940. The next move for the Frank family is to immigrate to America, which failed, leaving the family no choice but to go into hiding.

Frank's daily accounts describes how her father furnishes the concealed rooms behind a bookcase in the building where his business is located, which she refers to as the "Secret Annex." Frank also describes how her father's business partner Herman Van Pels, his wife and son join the Franks in hiding along with the dentist neighbor they let share their sanctuary.

These eight people remain in the Secret Annex for just over two years before being betrayed to the Nazis and captured. Frank, her mother and sister Margot die while detained in Hitler's death camps. Her father miraculously survives, returning to Amsterdam after his release, discovering one of his employees has kept Anne's diary. Frank published various editions of the diary before, after being authenticated by the Institute for War Documentation, its publication for general readers.

Frank's account of her life during these dark days are so perceptive, almost analytical, especially for someone so young while in hiding. She paints a vivid picture of the relationships with her housemates, psychological and physical burdens endured by the fellow inhabitants along with the assistance provided by outsiders. Frank's words are so prolific, laced with sensitivity and poignancy it is hard to believe such a young person's words could paint such a believable world of such horrific circumstances, which most likely is the magic of—young innocence countering an evil mind on a path of destruction—the profoundness of the words that encapsulated such a dark period in history.

One can't help but be struck by the purity and innocence with which Frank writes about her feelings and relationships with the others in the "Annex," particularly as she matured and began to become more sexually self aware as evident with her entries of her growing attachment to Peter Van Pels.

In her accounts Frank is perceived as more introspective and philosophical, exhibiting more character and integrity than most of the adults depicted in her writings, which is obviously due to her being the author of the journal and her young thoughts as provocative and capitulating as they are—still those of an adolescent.

That aside Frank's journal gives a perspective of Jewish Germany through the eyes of a young girl as it was lived, which lends great credence to the work. Her inspirational words "The best remedy for those who are frightened, lonely or unhappy is to go outside somewhere they can be alone with the sky, nature and God. For then, and only then, can you feel that everything is as it should be and that God wants people to be happy amid nature's beauty and simplicity," so intuitive and adult-like can be considered timeless pearls of wisdom.

Frank's writing is phenomenal, her depth of introspection is powerful and incredibly inspiring. One of my favorite lines is "paper has more patience than people," a proven fact as her diary remains in circulation and found on most high school reading agendas. Sadly, Frank met her death just weeks (although the time frame wavers) before her camp was liberated by British and Canadian troops.

It boggles the mind after reading this book as to what caliber of writer Frank might have become as an adult. I leave you with these final words from Frank's diary, which have as much meaning today as they did during Frank's short-lived anguished life: "It's difficult in times like these: ideals, dreams and cherished hopes rise within us, only to be crushed by grim reality. It's a wonder I haven't abandoned all my ideals. Yet, I cling to them because I still believe, in spite of everything that people are truly good at heart."