

The Tilted World ~ Tom Franklin & Beth Ann Fennelly

PAGE TURNERS MEETING – JULY 14, 2015 @ 6:30

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Did you know anything about the Great Flood of 1927 before you picked up *The Tilted World*? Even though it is a fictional piece, did the novel inspire you to find out what actually happened during this time period?
2. *The Tilted World* is also set during the Prohibition Era, and the issues of this greatly affected the plot. Did you identify with the bootleggers or the prohibitionists in the novel?
3. *The Tilted World* is written in third person from two different perspectives --- Ingersoll's and Dixie Clay's --- in alternating chapters. How do you think this approach adds to or detracts from the story?
4. *The Tilted World* is written by two authors. Does it read differently than a book that is written by one author?
5. Language and dialect play an important role in the book. Do you think the Southern dialect is rendered successfully?
6. The authors' choose to use a great deal of figurative language, especially similes ["wet towels hanging out of the upstairs windows like tongues" (65); "Her nylon stockings sagged around her ankles like shedding snakeskin." (65)]. Do they provide necessary context or flavor, or do you think they are overdone?
7. At the end of Chapter 5 when Jesse, Ham and Ingersoll first meet, Ingersoll realizes that Jesse has been drinking water the entire time they've been at dinner. Of course, Ham and Ingersoll are both drunk from all the moonshine. How does this discovery set the stage for what happens in the latter half of the book?
8. Ingersoll grew up an orphan. How do you think that independence informed his character and his choices throughout the novel? Do you think it's part of the reason why he chooses to give Willy to Dixie Clay?
9. At the beginning of the novel, there's a showdown between Jesse and two revenuers interested in making an arrest. Dixie Clay intercepts the arrest, pretending to be a posse of gunslingers protecting Jesse and the still. Given what you find out about Jesse, do you think she made the right choice or is her loyalty displaced?
10. Ingersoll is a revenuer; his job is to arrest bootleggers, yet he clearly has feelings for Dixie Clay, despite finding out about her secret profession. In the end, he decides not to arrest her. Do you think this is a realistic plot development? Would a man tied to a job look the other way if the person he was going after was a love interest?
11. The authors withhold facts about Ham's identity and his relationship to Ingersoll until more than half of the book has unfolded. Did your opinion of Ham change once you found out who he was? Did the discovery change the way you perceived Ingersoll? When reading a book, do you prefer to know who characters are up front, or do you think surprise twists can sometimes add to the momentum of the story?
12. There are many secrets throughout the novel, and each is revealed at a different strategic point. Did you solve any of the mysteries before the truth was revealed, or did any of them catch you by surprise?
13. The epilogue provides a sense of closure for the book. Did you like the ending and find it fitting? Do you prefer to read books where events are wrapped up tidily, or would you rather have a few loose ends?

JOTTINGS...