



# Texas Talking Book News

Texas State Library and Archives Commission WINTER 2017

## Director's Report

Greetings! Here is the latest news:

**'Tis the season for best books:** December and January always see the publication of lists of best-of-the-year and award-winning books. While many of the books on these lists become well-known because they spend time on best seller lists and have garnered their share of publicity, the lists also include other books that are less well-known. We looked at four lists for 2016: The National Book Awards, The National Book Critics Circle Awards, The New York Times' Best Books, and Time Magazine's Best Books. All books listed here are available on BARD for download and most are available on digital cartridge. If you would like to read one of these books, please call 1-800-252-9605 and ask a reader consultant for assistance.

**The Underground Railroad by Colson Whitehead, DB 85212.** A young slave escapes and makes her way to freedom on the Underground Railroad. Winner of the 2016 National Book Award for Fiction and listed as a best fiction book by both The New York Times and Time Magazine.

**Imagine Me Gone by Adam Haslett, DB 84437.** A family in the 1960s copes with the devastating effects of mental illness. Contains violence and strong language. Nominated for both a National Book Critics Circle Award for Fiction and National Book Award for Fiction, as well as being named a best fiction book by Time Magazine.

**Nothing Ever Dies: Vietnam and the Memory of War by Viet Thanh Nguyen, DB 85563.** Examining his topic from many angles, the author explores his theory that all wars are fought twice: once on the battlefield and again in memory. A finalist for the National Book Award for Non-Fiction and nominated for a National Book Critics Circle Award for Non-Fiction. Nguyen's 2015 novel about the final days of the Vietnam War, **The Sympathizer, DB 82047**, won the 2016 Pulitzer Prize for Fiction.

**Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City by Matthew Desmond, DB 83870.** A sociologist studies eight poor families, the conditions they live in, and their relationships with their landlords. Nominated for a National Book Critics Circle Award for Non-Fiction and listed as one of the best non-fiction books by The New York Times.

**A new way to use the BARD download site:** The National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS) has rolled out a new way to download books from the BARD site. BARD Express allows users to select multiple books for download,

and then books can be downloaded sequentially. Even better, it automatically unzips the files. Don't feel like learning a new trick? Don't worry, you can still use BARD just like you always have. For more information about the new option, please see the more in-depth explanation later in this newsletter.

**A new statewide reading program:** The Texas State Library and Archives Commission's Center for the Book has launched a new statewide reading program called, *Read Across Texas*. The purpose of the program is to engage people in tough but important conversations on topics that impact their communities. Libraries and other community groups are especially encouraged to sponsor reading activities and programming around these timely topics. For more information about how to participate in a community program or even set up a program in your community, please visit the state library's web site at <https://www.tsl.texas.gov/readacrosstexashowto> or contact the Center for the Book at 1-512-936-2505. The topic for 2017 is "The Veteran Experience" and features books that examine what happens when veterans come home from war. Three of the featured books are available on BARD, on digital cartridge, or in other formats. If you would like to read any of these books, please call 1-800-252-9605 and ask a reader consultant for assistance.

- **Billy Lynn's Long Halftime Walk by Ben Fountain, DB 75765 and BR 19748**
- **What It Is Like to Go to War by Karl Marlantes, DB 73768**
- **You Know When the Men Are Gone by Siobhan Fallon, DT 7103, LB 06759, and available for special download at <https://www.tsl.texas.gov/tbp/tbpbookclub/index.html>**

Until next time,  
Ava Smith, Director,  
Talking Book Program

### **Helpful contact information for the Talking Book Program**

- To order books or report a problem with your machine: 1-800-252-9605
- To request an application or ask about enrollment: 1-800-252-9605
- To access the toll-free information line: 1-866-388-6397
- To contact the Disability Information and Referral Center: 1-800-252-9605
- To contact the Public Awareness Office: 1-512-463-5452 or 1-800-252-9605
- To send email to anyone in the Talking Book Program:  
**[tbp.services@tsl.texas.gov](mailto:tbp.services@tsl.texas.gov)**
- To ask for assistance using BARD or to make changes to your account:  
1-800-252-9605 or **[tbp.bard@tsl.texas.gov](mailto:tbp.bard@tsl.texas.gov)**
- To ask a librarian for reading advice or reference assistance: 1-800-252-9605 or  
**[tbp.ral@tsl.texas.gov](mailto:tbp.ral@tsl.texas.gov)**
- To access the TBP blog: **<https://www.tsl.texas.gov/texastalkingbooks/>**
- To see the TBP book club schedule:  
**<https://www.tsl.texas.gov/tbp/tbpbookclub/index.html>**

## **BARD Express is now available!**

Have you avoided getting a BARD account because downloading your books on-line seems too complicated? Or perhaps you already use BARD, and you wish the search features were better? We have good news: NLS has created an application that simplifies downloading your books on-line.

BARD Express is a new piece of software specifically for patrons who download from a computer. It is ideal for folks who find it too complicated to download compressed files, unzip them, and move them to a flash-drive or cartridge to play on the DTBM. It works with JAWS, WindowEyes, and NVDA screen readers.

BARD Express also has new features to browse, filter, and search the collection. For example:

- Limit Recently Added Titles to the subject(s) of your interest
- Search for a specific series and then queue the entire series for download
- Filter your keyword search by subject to find exactly what you need

These new search features and filters may even appeal to patrons who mainly use the BARD Mobile app on a hand-held device. Some early adopters of BARD Express have found it easier to search and add titles to their wish list via BARD Express and then download those titles through the BARD Mobile app.

As with all software there are two important caveats:

- BARD Express is a Windows-based application and does not work on Mac Computers
- BARD Express currently works with audio-books only. At this point it does not work with BARD Braille books

How to get BARD Express:

- If you already have a BARD account, **log into BARD** and go to the Additional Links section. Click on the **BARD Express** link to download the software.
- If you are a TBP patron and you have never used BARD, consider giving it a try now that it's easier than ever. Fill out the BARD application at: **<https://nlsbard.loc.gov/TX1A/ApplicationInstructions.html>**

For questions about BARD Express call 1-800-252-9605 or 512-463-5458, or email us at **[tbp.bard@tsl.texas.gov](mailto:tbp.bard@tsl.texas.gov)**

Call the Disability Information and Referral Center toll-free at 1-800-252-9605 for information about disabilities and health conditions.

Talking Book Program  
Texas State Library and Archives Commission  
PO Box 12927  
Austin TX 78711-2927

Free Matter for the  
Blind or Physically  
Handicapped



**The Talking Book Program will be closed on the below listed holiday.**

Monday, February 20 ~ President's Day

Of course, you can leave a voicemail message or send e-mail on a holiday.

Talking Book Program Texas State Library and Archives Commission  
PO Box 12927 Austin TX 78711-2927  
**1-800-252-9605 (in Texas)**  
512-463-5458 (in Austin) 512-936-0685 (fax)  
You can contact TBP by email **[tbp.services@tsl.texas.gov](mailto:tbp.services@tsl.texas.gov)**.  
Also, visit our new blog at **[www.tsl.texas.gov/texastalkingbooks/](http://www.tsl.texas.gov/texastalkingbooks/)**  
for up-to-date information.

Comments or complaints regarding programs and services of the Texas State Library and Archives Commission may be made to:  
Director and Librarian. PO Box 12927, Austin, TX 78711-2927.

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## Books Worth Revisiting: The Brother Cadfael Chronicles

When Ellis Peters (pseudonym for writer Edith Pargeter, 1913-1995) wrote her 1977 novel featuring a Welsh monk residing in a medieval English abbey, she was writing a single mystery story without much thought of building a major series from it. Peters, however, found in Cadfael not only a most interesting character to develop but a time and place that yielded plenty of intrigue, mayhem, and romance. The Cadfael stories take place during a period in English history known as The Anarchy (1135-1154), when royal cousins Stephen and Maud—both grandchildren of William the Conqueror—plunged England into civil war as they fought for control of the throne. Cadfael is the herbalist for the Abbey of Saint Peter and Saint Paul, located in Shrewsbury, just a few miles from the Welsh border; the town and surrounding countryside is held for Stephen. Cadfael came to the monastic life in his forties, having spent many years both as a crusader in the Holy Lands and as a sea captain in the Mediterranean Sea. His worldly experiences, his skill with plants, and his native intelligence make him a go-to person whenever the abbot needs someone to go outside the Benedictine enclave; his insatiable curiosity and ability to fathom human motivations makes him an invaluable colleague and friend to the local sheriff. Despite the Benedictine way of life that is supposed to be quiet and peaceful, the enclave has its own dramas, from clashes of personality to festering secrets to general unease in a country torn by civil war. Peters' clever mysteries, believable and endearing characters, and discerning eye for period details made the Cadfael chronicles the grandfather of historical mysteries. All twenty-one novels are available for BARD download.

1. **A Morbid Taste for Bones DB 28174 and BR 03876**: Cadfael is part of a group that journeys into Wales to dig up a saint's bones with the result of murder.
2. **One Corpse Too Many DB 26456, BR 04568 and LB 02834** : During civil war, a captured garrison is put to the sword, but Cadfael discovers that someone has used the situation to cover up a murder.
3. **Monk's Hood DB 39062** : Cadfael works to discover who slipped poison into the meal of a guest at the abbey.
4. **Saint Peter's Fair DB 39058 and LB 03070** : A merchant is murdered, his niece is in danger, and Cadfael wonders what is the murderer really after?
5. **The Leper of Saint Giles DB 18574** : Cadfael ponders the connections between a murdered nobleman, his most-unwilling bride-to-be, and a mysterious leper at the local lazaret house.
6. **The Virgin in the Ice DB 45828** : While searching for two missing children, Cadfael discovers a murdered nun frozen in a stream.
7. **The Sanctuary Sparrow DB 36543** : A traveling jongleur seeks sanctuary in the abbey after a frenzied mob accuses him of assault on a village goldsmith.
8. **The Devil's Novice DB 22269** : Cadfael wonders why a young man haunted by nightmares is trying to become a monk when he is obviously not suited for the calling.

- 9. Dead Man's Ransom DB 23416** : Before an exchange of prisoners can be completed, one of the prisoners is smothered with a finely embroidered cloth. Cadfael has some threads and hunts for the cloth that will identify the murderer.
- 10. The Pilgrim of Hate DB 35130** : Politics, miracles, and murder all come together during St. Winifred's festival at the abbey.
- 11. An Excellent Mystery DB 46311** : The civil war continues, and the cathedral city of Winchester is the latest community to be devastated. Two monks—one once a celebrated crusader, the other young and mute—seek shelter at Cadfael's abbey.
- 12. The Raven in the Foregate DB 32161 and BR 08413** : The new village priest—likened to a raven because of his flapping black robes and general air of doom—turns up dead. No one is surprised, and more than a few might even be happy about this turn of events.
- 13. The Rose Rent DB 26605** : A mutilated rose bush, a murdered monk, a drowned weaver, and a kidnapped widow keep Cadfael busy with plenty of suspects.
- 14. The Hermit of Eyton Forest DB 27717** : Cadfael ponders a missing messenger, a runaway serf, and a small boy whose grandmother wants him to marry a woman more than twice his age.
- 15. The Confession of Brother Haluin DB 29525** : After a terrible accident, Cadfael hears the death-bed confession of a fellow monk. When the man recovers, he asks Cadfael to accompany him on a penitential quest that has its roots in a forbidden love affair eighteen years earlier.
- 16. The Heretic's Apprentice DB 32162** : A young man returns from the Holy Lands with the body of his master and a beautifully carved box as dowry for his master's adopted daughter. Soon, a charge of heresy and a murdered man lead Cadfael to take a closer look at the box and its contents.
- 17. The Potter's Field DB 33278** : The plowing of a newly-acquired field turns up the body of a woman whose only remaining identifying feature is her raven-black hair. Many suspect the body is that of the abandoned wife of the local potter, who had entered the cloister a few months before she mysteriously disappeared.
- 18. The Summer of the Danes DB 35131** : On a diplomatic mission into Wales, Cadfael finds himself in the middle of a deadly quarrel between two Welsh princes. While trying to find a runaway-bride, Cadfael is captured by invading Danish mercenaries.
- 19. The Holy Thief DB 37183** : When a fall flood threatens the abbey's buildings, the monks frantically move valuables to higher ground. In the confusion, Saint Winifred's reliquary disappears. Suspicion falls on a visiting novice; when a witness is murdered, the young man's future looks grim.
- 20. Brother Cadfael's Penance DB 40138** : As the civil war drags on, Cadfael breaks his monastic vows in a quest to find and rescue a young knight in the service of the Empress Maud.
- 21. A Rare Benedictine DB 32163** : Three short stories tell of Cadfael's former life and how he came to enter the Benedictine order.