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SUMMER READING

BFA'91 | BEST-SELLING AUTHOR

MEG CABOT



Meg Cabot is the author of the best-selling Princess Diaries series, which sold more than 20 million copies and was made into two hit movies by Disney. She writes books for adults, young adults, and children, including *Awaken* (available in July) and *Size 12 is the New Black* (available in September). She has lived in France and California and now divides her time between New York City, Key West, Fla., and Bloomington, Ind.

WARRIOR PRINCESS

A *Little Princess* was one of the first books I ever read. It's the tale of a young British schoolgirl named Sara Crewe, who is left orphaned and penniless in Victorian England. Every day, all day, Sara is bullied by more privileged girls (and a cruel school administrator).

Sara endures it by imagining that she's a princess. Sara's tormentors are bewildered by her warrior-like sensibilities, which echo those of Sun Tzu, author of the ancient military treatise *The Art of War*. Sara is kind to those weaker than herself and holds herself aloof from the cruelties of her enemies. In the end, all of Sara's bullies are smited.

Like many people, I was bullied as a child. I adopted a Sara Crewe outlook on the whole thing: I too pretended I was secretly a princess. I was as kind as I could be to those weaker than myself and held myself as aloof as possible from the cruelties of my enemies.

It worked ... I survived childhood and my teen years, enjoyed a great time as an

undergrad at IU, and eventually went on to write my own treatise on bullying, *The Princess Diaries* (along with about 80 other books, all with similar themes of overcoming adversity).

In the fourth grade, while attending what was then Elm Heights Elementary School in Bloomington, Ind., a fellow classmate named Rosemary announced she was going to beat my "b*tt" (for reasons still unknown to me).

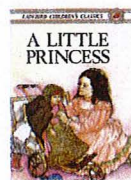
After informing my parents of this alarming news, my father (who taught at the Kelley School of Business from 1969 until his death when I was 26) taught me how to throw a punch.

My mother, on the other hand, felt it wiser to purchase a copy of *A Little Princess* for me. To this day she considers it "*The Art of War* for children."

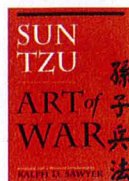
I'm happy to say I was able to avoid a physical fight with Rosemary. She, like the many other bullies I've encountered over the years, mysteriously lost the desire to beat my "b*tt" when I failed to rise to the bait (her taunts).

Everyone has encountered bullying in one form or another. It's growing more and more prevalent. It occurs not just in schools but in the workplace, online, in sports arenas and traffic jams, airport check-in lines, movie theaters, even grocery stores and nail salons.

Sara Crewe, the heroine of *A Little Princess*, has her ups and downs (and, as with most books, the movie versions of her story are not to be trusted), but in the end, she shows children (and adults) exactly how to deal with bullies, as well as how to believe in oneself.



A Little Princess
Frances Hodgson Burnett



The Art of War
Sun Tzu

MEDIA EXECUTIVE
PAUL CAINE, BA'86

Paul Caine, executive vice president, chief revenue officer and group president of advertising, is responsible for global advertising revenue for Time Inc.

This autobiography was written by a friend of mine. [Schroff was a 35-year-old, single, successful ad sales executive, who met an 11-year-old homeless panhandler. She decided to take him out to lunch, and so began a life-changing 25-year friendship.] Her story is inspiring, relatable, and carries many important messages. Although I've known her through much of her journey, reading this book inspired me to do more, care more, and be more present — all important life lessons.

An Invisible Thread

Laura Schroff and Alex Tresniowski

INTERNATIONAL OPERA STAR
ANGELA BROWN, '86

Angela Brown is an international opera star who debuted at The Metropolitan Opera in 2004 to rave reviews. She is considered a trailblazer on a mission to bring operatic and classical vocal performance to a diverse audience. A 1997 National Metropolitan Opera Council Auditions winner, Brown attended the IU Jacobs School of Music as a student in the studio of Virginia Zeani. Brown received the IU African American Arts Institute's inaugural Herman C. Hudson Alumni Award in 2006.

I wanted to hear Whitney Houston's mother's version of the rise, and subsequent fall, of her daughter. She was there from the beginning. I did not want to hear the rumors. I wanted to hear the raw emotion of a mother.

My teacher, Virginia Zeani, once said to me that Whitney Houston could have been an opera singer if she had trained classically. This intrigued me. Being a singer/performer myself, a contemporary of Ms. Houston and a big fan of her and her music, I was interested to read her story through her mother's eyes.

This first-person account might prove to be informative and a cautionary tale of what to do or what not to do for some who might consider going into the musical field.

Remembering Whitney

Cissy Houston