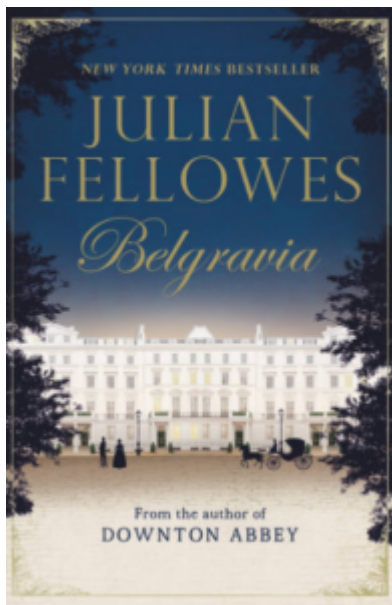


Review: 'Belgravia' a bit disappointing

By Kathryn Reed

The predictability of "Belgravia" had my book club giving it mediocre scores when it came to whether we liked it and would we recommend it. My ratings were lower than the group average.



The Julian Fellowes (Grand Central Publishing, 2016) novel is mostly set in London in the mid-1800s. While it is considered an historical novel, it's more like a period piece. Only the first chapter has a real sense of anything historical.

Those who watched "Downton Abbey" had better things to say about the book than the rest of us. Fellowes was the creator-writer of that television series. He has also won an Academy award in 2002 for best screenplay for "Gosford Park."

Clearly, Fellowes has writing credentials. But from his efforts with "Belgravia" this would have seemed more like an early attempt at writing.

Secrets and lies that link two disparate families are woven throughout the book. While at times it seems like the lies will unravel everything, ultimately it is a lie that binds them together.

Nobility, money, social climbing, adultery and love are part

of the book.

Society's various classes are a central theme – from those born with titles and money, to the working person striving to rise to the next level, to the ranks among the servants. Each seems to have a jealousy of the other, a certain disdain and somewhat of a desire to be something they aren't.

“Belgravia” is a fairly quick read, and good for a bit of escapism, but it is also a bit repetitive.