

Deja Dead Discussion Questions

by Kathy Reichs

Author Bio: (<http://www.litlovers.com/reading-guides/13-fiction/1015-deja-dead-reichs?start=1>)

Kathy Reichs (b 1950) lives in Charlotte, North Carolina, and Montreal, Quebec, Canada. In addition to being a novelist, she is a forensic anthropologist working in both NC and Quebec who has seen firsthand the aftermath of murderers.

- One of the reasons she is Quebec's forensics anthropologist is because she is one of the few in the profession who is fluent in French.
- In 2005, Fox TV launched *Bones*, a forensics/police procedural inspired by Reichs' life and writing. In a neat twist, the main character, Temperance Brennan, is a forensic anthropologist who, as a sideline, writes thrillers about a fictional anthropologist named Kathy Reichs.

Characters:

- **Temperance Brennan** – Forensic Anthropologist.
- **Pierre LaManche** – Director of the laboratoire de Medecine Legale. Brennan's boss.
- **Inspector Claudel** – Police officer in charge of the murder case.
- **Gabby (Gabrielle) Macaulay** – Brennan's friend from Grad school.
- **Katy Brennan** – Brennan's daughter. She is in college.
- **Isabelle Gagnon** – Victim #2.
- **Chantale Trottier** – Victim #1.
- **Marc Bergeron** – Works with Brennan. Forensic dentist.
- **Pete Brennan** – Brennan's ex-husband. Ex-military.
- **Margaret Adkins** – Victim #3.
- **Michael Charbonneau** – Claudel's partner.
- **Birdie** – Brennan's cat.
- **Andrew Ryan** – Detective Inspector SQ.
- **Grace Damas** – 4th victim

Discussion Questions:

1. Did you like the book? Why or why not?
2. This book was written in 1997. Did it feel out of date or does it stand the test of time?

3. This story is told from a first person perspective. Did you like or dislike that technique?
4. Each body is described in detail. Was it helpful to you or did you find it over the top?
5. What kind of character is Temperance Brennan? Which of her personality traits do you admire...or dislike? Does Reichs do a good job of fleshing her out?
6. How has Tempe's struggle with alcohol affected her life and career? How does she cope with her addiction? Has Reichs painted a realistic picture of a recovering alcoholic? Does this dark side of Tempe add to...or detract from...the plot?
7. What convinces Tempe that the five murdered women are connected? Why don't her colleagues buy her theory? Consider the differences between intuitive vs. empirical approaches to solving crimes?
8. Does Claudel have a legitimate reason to dislike Tempe? Did Tempe to overstep the boundaries of her job? Or is she right in following up her hunches when the detectives dismiss her theories?
9. How does Reich depict the difficulties Tempe faces as a female in two professions (homicide work and forensics medicine) typically dominated by men?
10. Do the lengthy technical descriptions of Tempe's work enhance the novel...or do you find them distracting, off-putting, or overly detailed?
11. Was Gabby being stalked? Why didn't she go to Brennan for help in the beginning? If she had, do you think anything would have worked out differently in the end?
12. Of all the police officers she knows, why do you think Temperance kept calling Detective Ryan when she was in trouble?
13. Do you think Katy (Brennan's daughter) was a believable, well-formed character? Why or why not?
14. Were you thrown off track by the red-herring Reichs put in your way—the connection between Gabby's work on prostitution and the Tempe's search for the serial killer?
15. Does this mystery thriller deliver in terms of suspense and surprise? Or is it the storyline and the ending predictable?
16. Why do you think Reichs named the book "Deja Dead?" What is the meaning behind the title?
17. Kathy Reich has been compared to Patricia Cornwell and her heroine, Dr. Kay Scarpetta. How do the two writers (and their heroines) compare?
18. What did you think of the storyline/plot? How credible is it?
19. Did the differences between the book and the TV show make an impact or disturb your reading of the story?
20. There are currently 18 books in the Temperance Brennan series. Will you read any of the other books in this series? Other series by Kathy Reichs?

References:

- Lit Lovers - <http://www.litlovers.com/reading-guides/13-fiction/1015-deja-dead-reichs>
- Goodreads - http://www.goodreads.com/book/show/231604.D_j_Dead
- Goodreads - <http://www.goodreads.com/topic/show/47864-deja-dead--book-club-selection-spoiler-alert>
- Novelist - <http://web.b.ebscohost.com/novp/detail?vid=2&sid=17e4c867-12e5-4f5c-bc3f-a91be1657513%40sessionmgr114&hid=124&bdata=JnNpdGU9bm92cC1saXZl#db=neh&UI=006110>
- Peppermint PHD - <http://epkwrsmith.blogspot.com/2012/04/book-review-deja-dead.html>
- Wikispaces - <http://dejadead.wikispaces.com/>

If you liked *Deja Dead*, try...

- Face of Deception – Iris Johansen
- Postmortem – Patricia Cornwell
- Silent mercy – Fairstein, Linda A.
- The Silent Girl – Gerritsen, Tess
- Tensleep – Andrews, Sarah

Temperance Brennan Series

1. *Deja Dead* (1997)
2. *Death Du Jour* (1999)
3. *Deadly Decisions* (2000)
4. *Fatal Voyage* (2001)
5. *Grave Secrets* (2002)
6. *Bare Bones* (2003)
7. *Monday Mourning* (2003)
8. *Cross Bones* (2005)
9. *Break No Bones* (2006)
10. *Bones to Ashes* (2007)
11. *Devil Bones* (2008)
12. *206 Bones* (2009)
13. *Spider Bones* (2010) (aka *Mortal Remains*)
14. *Flash and Bones* (2011)
15. *Bones Are Forever* (2012)
- 15.5 *Bones In Her Pocket* (2013)
16. *Bones of the Lost* (2013)
- 16.5 *Swamp Bones* (2014)
17. *Bones Never Lie* (2014)
18. *Speaking in Bones* (2015)