

# [PDF] The Deptford Trilogy

Robertson Davies - pdf download free book

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#### Books Details:

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Author: Robertson Davies  
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#### Description:

"Who killed Boy Staunton?"

This is the question that lies at the heart of Robertson Davies's elegant trilogy comprising *Fifth Business*, *The Manticore*, and *World of Wonders*. Indeed, Staunton's death is the central event of each of the three novels, and *Rashomon*-style, each circles round to view it from a different perspective. In the first book, *Fifth Business*, Davies introduces us to Dunstan Ramsey and his "lifelong friend and enemy, Percy Boyd Staunton," both aged 10. It is a winter evening in the small Canadian village of Deptford, and Ramsey and Boy have quarreled. In a rage, Boy throws a snowball with a stone in it, misses his friend and hits the Baptist minister's pregnant wife by mistake. She

becomes hysterical and later that night delivers her child prematurely, a baby with birth defects. Even worse, she loses her mind. The snowball, the stone, the deformed baby christened Paul Dempster--this is the secret guilt that will bind Ramsey and Staunton together through their long lives: I was perfectly sure, you see, that the birth of Paul Dempster, so small, so feeble, and troublesome, was my fault. If I had not been so clever, so sly, so spiteful in hopping in front of the Dempsters just as Percy Boyd Staunton threw that snowball at me from behind, Mrs. Dempster would not have been struck. Did I never think that Percy was guilty? Indeed I did. Boy, however, "would fight, lie, do anything rather than admit" he feels guilty, too, and so the subject remains unresolved between them right up until the night Boy's body is found in his car, in a lake, with a stone in his mouth. The second novel, *The Manticore*, follows Staunton's son, David, through a course of Jungian therapy in Switzerland, while *World of Wonders* concentrates on Magnus Eisengrim, a renowned magician and hypnotist with ties to both Ramsey and Boy Staunton.

When it came to writing, three was Davies's favorite number. Before the Deptford books, he wrote (*Tempest-Tost*, *Leaven of Malice*, *A Mixture of Frailties*), and after it came (*The Rebel Angels*, *What's Bred in the Bone*, *The Lyre of Orpheus*). Excellent as these and Davies's other novels are, *The Deptford Trilogy* is arguably the masterpiece for which he'll best be remembered, as the combination of magic, archetype, and good, old-fashioned human frailty at work in these novels is a world of wonders unto itself, and guarantees these three books a permanent place among the great books of our time. --*Alix Wilber*

**Review** A series of three novels by Robertson Davies, consisting of *Fifth Business* (1970), *The Manticore* (1972), and *World of Wonders* (1975). Throughout the trilogy, Davies interweaves moral concerns and bits of arcane lore. The novels trace the lives of three men from the small town of Deptford, Ont., connected and transformed by a single childhood event: Percy "Boy" Staunton throws a snowball containing a stone at Dunstable (later Dunstan) Ramsay. Ramsay dodges the snowball and it hits Mary Dempster, who gives birth prematurely to a son, Paul, and slides into dementia. *Fifth Business* is an autobiographical letter written by Dunstan upon his retirement as headmaster of a boys' school; he has been tormented by guilt throughout his life. Boy Staunton lies at the bottom of Lake Ontario at the opening of *The Manticore*; the stone that hit Mrs. Dempster some 60 years earlier is found in his mouth. Much of the book describes the course of Jungian analysis undertaken by Boy's son David. *World of Wonders* tells the story of Paul Dempster. Kidnapped as a boy by a magician, he learns the trade and eventually becomes Magnus Eisengrim, one of the most successful acts on the European continent. -- --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

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