



Cycles

Lois D. Brown

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When a pair of misfit teens uncover disturbing experiments conducted in the basement of their neighbor's house, they become entangled in medical research that could destroy their lives and forever alter the human aging process.

She remembers things that never happened.
She's a stranger in her own home.
She always knew she was different.
She just didn't know why.
Until now.

Renee Beaumont is about to die . . . again.

Cycles Details

Date : Published December 15th 2011 by Levanter Publishing

ISBN :

Author : Lois D. Brown

Format : Kindle Edition 261 pages

Genre : Young Adult, Fantasy, Paranormal, Mystery

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From Reader Review Cycles for online ebook

Pat Raab says

Fascinating. I'll never think of an eclipse the same way again.

Tess says

One word to describe this book-Beautiful. Beautiful writing, beautiful plot, and beautiful characters! Cycles is very different from my normal read. It has that Sci Fi type of aspect to it, but it is very much a mystery read. The writing in this book is exquisite! It made me immersed in the world Brown created, and her writing captivated me. I really felt I was right there along with Sam and Renee trying to figure out the mysteries of Renee's past! Throughout the book there are these journal entries written by a woman named Helen and the whole time I was trying to figure out how that related to Renee. I loved how it wasn't until very close to the end that I found out what was really going on. Brown always gave me enough information to keep me interested but not enough to where I got bored because I had figured it out! She also created wonderfully complex characters in Renee and Sam. They were the social outcastes, but they had each other which was enough. There might be a hint of romance in there too. Overall I really loved this book, and I will definitely be looking out for Spaces, the sequel to Cycles!

Ciayrra The Scorpion Flower says

Fun fantastic read!

I thought it was interesting, a disease that forces you to rebirth. It's quite scary thought. Similar to passed lives. This was a quite interesting theory for a story.

Mary says

After an accident, thirteen-year-old Renee Beaumont needs a blood transfusion, which shouldn't be a big deal, but it turns out her blood is unique. Her neighbor Dr. Dawson fortunately has some blood that he claims is hers that the doctors can use to save her life, but Renee can't remember ever giving him her blood. When she and her best friend Sam investigate, they discover a cache of blood in Dr. Dawson's lab that's all labelled with his dead daughter's name. What does it mean that Renee's blood matches his daughter's?

This novel seemed uneven and juvenile at the beginning until I realized the characters were only thirteen! Action, suspense, and mystery propel the story, along with supernatural and mystical elements. Many readers will enjoy the native American (Ojibwe Indian) spiritual elements as well. The evil villains, especially the woman, make the story seem a tad melodramatic, but overall this novel works well as a middle grade read, not YA, as it is labelled. Recommended for ages 10 & up.

Ashley Chen says

The plot was amazing! So unique but with a hint of familiarity. I was attracted to it immediately! And I, myself, is a guesser. By that I mean I would guess with the characters, trying to figure out what is the mystery. I just kept on flipping pages. I can't believe that I didn't read the book when I first got it.

Though the characters are fairly young-ish. But they are very sophisticated and mature, but this made it a little unrealistic. ./ They are 13 after all. But often this fact was forgotten due to the fact that the story was so intense! I mean it kind of reminded me of Kathy Reich's Virals/Seizure books. It was a mystery with teens. I enjoyed reading this book a lot.

I love the mystery, contemporary, and paranormal aspects of the book. This was an fantastic read!! I would recommend it to everyone!

Isaiyan Morrison says

The writing in this novel was beautiful.

The story moved slow for me in the beginning but once they find out that Renee Beaumont's blood is different, the story takes off from there.

The book has paranormal and mystery elements that I enjoyed. However, this novel read as either a middle grade/ YA novel, which are the types of novels I don't read as much. Still, I remained hooked until the end.

Helen Hesketh says

Cracking read

This book is well written, fast pasted with a imaginative storyline a great mix of folklore and science. I managed to read in two days

Stephanie says

The author of Cycles, Lois Brown, sent my other blog, Teen Text Talk, her book to review. There was a contest for however many reviews she received by a certain date. There was no way that I was going to get this book read in such a short amount of time, so I didn't bother with the contest, but told her that when I got to the book I'd give it an honest review. A month later, on my birthday no less, I read it in one sitting...seriously, it's that entertaining.

Renee Beaumont is a typical 13 year-old girl, she loves horses, her best friend who is an older boy science genius, Sam, and her neighbor, Dr. Dawson, a man who let's her come over whenever she wants and who takes care of her when her rich overly busy parents aren't around, which is a lot. One day Renee gallops away trying to save the doctor's prized horse from thieves, the horse trips and down goes Renee on a rock. At the hospital they can't figure out what is wrong, she's losing loads of blood, but they can't find out her blood-type. In walks her neighbor to save the day, he has some of her blood saved from a time he helped her with a science fair project...the only thing is this is all a lie and things only get weirder for Renee and her Sam as they try to find out the truth.

At first, this book seemed a bit confusing, it intersperses Renee stories with that of an older woman who is telling the story of her daughter's disappearance through diary entries. I spent the first 40 or so pages trying to figure out what exactly was going on, which I think will compel curious readers forward. And, although I know a bit about science and love science fiction, I did not see where this book was going. I'm guessing it's because this book begins so easily and subtly. The ending, WOW, so looking forward to the 2nd book!

Frankly, I need someone else to read this book so I can talk about it with them. I've never read a book like this before.

Sarah says

The premise of this book is seriously cool. I just don't know if this story is the right story to present the idea. The overall plot was fine, but the execution was... Just okay.

Recommended for readers ages 10-16

Pros:

- Premise, as stated above
- Characters. The characterization was a bit inconsistent or lacking, but there are some very interesting people within this book. Ms. Frazier reminded me so much of my junior high English teacher!
- Quick, easy, appropriate read. Very well suited for older children/teens

Cons:

- Over-simplified style and juvenile dialogue
 - No suspense! I was waiting for it to get scary but it never did. I mean, just from the synopsis about the kids finding blood in Dr. Dawson's basement, sounds like it could be a thriller, right? Well, I regret to say that I was a bit underwhelmed
-

Juhina says

This book was addicting, to say the least. The beginning might be a bit misleading, 13/14 year old best friends, one with a love of horses and the other with a love of books and knowledge. But this book definitely surprised me and exceeded my expectations! This book is a mix of mystery, contemporary, and paranormal, which is a mix i'm starting to really warm up to!

The novel opened up with Renee getting into an accident and losing a large percentage of her blood, therefore a blood transfusion is needed. However, her blood does not match any other blood type, even some

of the rare ones. When her neighbor, Dr.Dawson tells the hospital he has some of her blood stored in his house from a science fair project.. a project that Renee has never participated in. This begins the detective work of Renee and her best friend Sam. Renee and Sam seemed mature for their age, at times i would forget they're only 13 and 14, I was so engrossed in the story and following the duo during their search and attempted house break ins and science jargon, specifically about solar eclipses.

The climax of the story happened towards the end, and let me just say that I did NOT expect it at all! throughout the book you get a glimpse of journal entries of a woman accused of murdering her daughter in the 1960s. You have no idea how this is related to the story and whatever you will have in mind? yea it won't be that. Pleasantly surprised with the ending, though a tiny bit predictable, but the story ends with the beginning of a new mystery, which is what I will definitely be looking forward two in the second installment of Cycles by Lois D. Brown!

Ingrid says

The concept was fascinating, the storyline was interesting, the quality of writing was more than just a bit better than some of the other books I've read recently...I just couldn't get into it as much as I would have liked. It may be that it just didn't strike my fancy or that there was too much going on around me to really give it a fair fighting chance. I honestly don't know. What I do know that is that I probably will never read it again and will almost certainly never purchase the sequel. Is that to say the book was bad? No...I'm simply saying it wasn't for me. It will certainly go on my list of books to recommend to my friend's 13-year-old.

Beth says

I've enjoyed the mysteries I've read by this author, so thought I would try this YA paranormal. I did find some punctuation and wrong word errors that could have been cleaned up with editing. I also thought some plot points were awkward and unlikely. However, the story was interesting, and I didn't find the story as laden with teen angst as many for the genre. An exception to that is Sam's "love" interest and the gum swapping scene. I found his infatuation to be implausible and that scene particular silly and even gross. Even though I did like the characters of Renee and Sam, I'm not sure I feel compelled to read the next in the series. Which reminds me, in the time since I downloaded this book a couple of months ago, the cover and title have changed. The title for this one is now "The Saros Curse" (previously "Cycles") and the next is now "The Dead Chasm" (previously "Spaces").

Michelle Isenhoff says

I always tread cautiously when my blog (Bookworm Blather) attracts requests for book reviews. I see a wide range of talent and professionalism, but Cycles, by Lois D. Brown, I am pleased to say, rates among the best stories I've received.

Within, an accident leaves 13-year-old Renee Beaumont's life completely shaken. Not only does she narrowly escape death, but doctors in the hospital identify abnormalities in her blood. Abnormalities that lead to questions concerning her parentage. Abnormalities that may be linked to an increasing number of dizzy spells and memories that cannot possibly be her own. Abnormalities that prompt the sudden interest of

individuals who do not have Renee's best interest at heart. Abnormalities that push Renee, along with her best friend Sam, on a wild ride of discovery that lands them smack in the center of a most peculiar blending of science and legend.

I have lots of good things to say about the story's mechanics. Intrigue begins right away. The opening chapters create a host of questions that are skillfully unraveled throughout the remainder of the story. A deadly horse epidemic, Renee's habit of drawing spirals, Sam's father's death, solar eclipses - all these details come back around to tuck nicely into the story later on. The plot is original, engaging and creative. There is a measure of predictability, but I think the kids for whom the book is intended (12-16) will enjoy figuring out the clues artfully planted along the way. And in all fairness, there were elements I didn't foresee.

As to Ms. Brown's writing, it's very nice. There are moments it doesn't read as smoothly as a title with a whole publishing team behind it, but I was very pleased with the overall effect. She creates some wonderfully descriptive word pictures, often in tandem with bright humor. For example, "Dawson cleared his throat again. He was either allergic to the hospital's disinfectant spray, or he was nervous." The title, too, is wonderfully metaphorical and clever.

The characters, as is often the case with contemporary teen fiction, feel a bit cliché. Rich girl with parents that ignore her. Geeky guy with a crush on a cheerleader. But they are given quirks that make them feel realistic and warmth that wins a reader over. Gamma Didi, on the other hand, is hugely original. An old Indian woman with gentle wisdom, odd habits, tribal memories, and modern intelligence, she's the perfect counterpoint to the teens. Indeed, she's the character that jumped off the page and became my favorite.

I would rate this book easily appropriate for kids 10 and older. Romance is kept sweet and innocent, language is perfectly clean. There is some violence at the end, but it isn't graphic or overwhelming. There is an element of spiritualism – souls of the departed watching out for the living and the mention of a seance – but it's very background, and a bit of mysticism is necessary for the story's magical elements. Ms. Brown nicely blends legend with science.

I enjoyed *Cycles* a great deal, and I'm happily putting out my recommendation. Besides, with a 2.99 price tag, you can't afford to pass it up!

Alisha says

It is summer 2015. I needed to make a run to Costco and picked up cheap lunch with my four children, ages seven and under. It was crowded and we shared one of the odd tables with Lois Brown! She was so kind and engaging with my kids. I had just finished *The Queen's Thief* series by Megan Whalen Turner and Mrs. Brown's daughter looked the perfect age to love it (plus *The Lioness* series by Pierce), so we started talking about books and she mentioned that she is an author. What a pleasant surprise! I noted the title and downloaded her three books when I got home. It was lovely to meet you, Lois!

Cycles is the story of a girl named Renee who is 13.5 and has her life change very quickly when she is in an accident after trying to save her neighbor's rare, living horse (after a horse epidemic that killed almost all others) from thieves. She loses a lot of blood, requiring a transfusion. However, her blood is odd and they do not have a match. Her neighbor, Dr. Dawson, tells the hospital staff that he has some of her blood stored (because of a science experiment that he helped her with, but this is a lie), and they use it to save her life.

The plot was interesting. Inventive, different, refreshing. The facts she shared about various things she based the story on read too formal for the rest of the writing style: for example, when she shares about the pressure needed to break an arm, or about the details of the eclipse cycle. It certainly moved at a quick pace and I stayed up later to read it, so it IS compelling.

I liked that she had different races than all white. Thank you. She labels and describes and equalizes, which I like. She didn't give too many descriptors of Alex Massri's hired arm other than he had tattoos, a low IQ, his name was Duane and Sam calls him a Gorilla. She does not come out and give him a race. HOWEVER, Duane actually means dark or black. So, I found it highly offensive that she used a gorilla as the descriptor. It is racist. Whether intended or not, I am surprised no one caught this, or that the author had this blind spot. Additionally when she describe Massri she says she is beautiful, then says she has a Barbie sculpted body. Barbie is a completely unattainable ideal. No thanks. Girls already have enough media hurled at them about what they "should" look like. Some of the phrases used in the book (Sam: didn't know why Renee was so irritable, but it was probably some girl thing he didn't want to know about. Sam: now he was surrounded by two silly, superstitious females. Gamma Didi: they don't want to talk to an old woman like me.) were sexist and ageist which I have no tolerance for, ESPECIALLY from a female writer!

On the one hand, I get it. Sam and Renee are outcasts, not very cool, etc, and maybe teenagers will relate to that. A lot of the school interactions were what any parent hopes school is not like, episodes of bullying for Sam, they were just awful.

The two descriptions of birth are somewhat at odds. First you have Helen having a baby alone, but her mother was a midwife, but also her mother died and she was only in town because of the funeral, I guess they were estranged, and her husband wasn't with her because he hated her mother (nice). Then you have Renee's father relating that her mother was unconscious for her birth and thinks it is the best way to have a baby. Both descriptions make birth something to fear. I think that is lazy writing because that is universally what is written in fiction about having a baby. So, that part was not original and was, again, something that I really despise seeing from a female author.

So, should you read it? yes. Resoundingly. I am being more specific than I usually am in reviews because, let's be honest, I have a newborn and have the downtime to give a solid review. I think it could have certainly benefitted from a good editor and I applaud Brown's obvious imaginative weaving of a story. I look forward to reading the other two books and will continue as she evolves and matures as a writer. I am glad I read it. Writing a book is a huge accomplishment!

puppitypup says

YA Sci Fi Some YA can be enjoyed at any age. This book, alas, is not one of them. Shockingly simplistic writing, as if it were out of a high school creative writing assignment.

In addition, the author seems to be writing about things that she has no first hand experience of. For example, Renee, at 5'2", sat upon a stool to groom her neighbor's horse. I am 5'4" and have owned many horses. Even the shortest required me to stand on tiptoes to brush its back. If I had sat upon a stool, I would have been brushing underbellies. Then she describes her brushing as being a scrolled circle. Anyone who has spent anytime brushing a horse knows that you brush along the hair, not against it, especially on underbellies! Unless your horse took a mud bath earlier in the day.

Similarly, the hospital scenes are written as if the author has never been in a hospital room. Having been bucked off plenty of times, I've spent a good deal of time in hospital rooms. The foot of the beds always face into the rooms, no way that Sam could have hidden at the foot of her bed.

I gave up at a third of the way in. The book was free, but not worth the frustration.
