The Lost Code: Key Literary References and Influences

Heart of Darkness by Joseph Conrad
CAS A CONR/eAudiobook
A man journeys through the Congo and contemplates the nature of good and evil. There are several references, especially in relation to Colonel Kurtz’s descent toward madness.

The Stand by Stephen King FIC KING
A battle between good and evil ensues after a deadly virus decimates the population. Producers cite this book as a major influence, and other King allusions (Carrie, On Writing, The Shining, Dark Tower series, etc.) pop up frequently.

The Odyssey by Homer FIC HOME/883 HOME/CD BOOK 883.1 HOME/CAS A HOME/eAudiobook
Greek epic about Odysseus's harrowing journey home to his wife Penelope after the Trojan War. Parallels abound, especially in the characters of Desmond and Penny.

Slaughterhouse-Five by Kurt Vonnegut FIC VON
A World War II soldier becomes “unstuck in time,” and is jerked back and forth between the past and future.

Alice in Wonderland and Through the Looking Glass by Lewis Carroll J CARR/CAS J CARR/eAudiobook
The surreal children’s classic about a young girl who falls down a rabbit hole to discover a world of nonsensical, comical characters and its sequel. Among other references, white rabbits are a recurring theme in Lost. *Alice only

The Wonderful Wizard of Oz by Frank L. Baum FIC BAUM/J BAUM
After a cyclone strands her in the land of Oz, Dorothy seeks a way home. Obvious tie-ins include the “Henry Gale” story, the red shoes Desmond observes in one of his flashes, and repeated references to “the man behind the curtain.”

Island Predecessors

The Lord of the Flies by William Golding FIC GOLD/CD J BOOK GOLD
A group of boys marooned on an island they believe to be haunted by a terrifying monster is divided in a power struggle between two groups in this classic tale of morality and society.

The Mysterious Island by Jules Verne J VERN/FIC VERN
Five men and a dog crash land their balloon on a faraway, fantastic island and struggle to survive as they uncover the island’s mysterious secrets.

Island by Aldous Huxley FIC HUXL
A remote island where the ideal society flourishes is threatened by the greed and envy of the outside world when an emissary of those who wish to oversite the island is shipwrecked there.

Lost on DVD

Lost Complete First Season
Lost Season 2: Extended Experience
Lost Season 3: The Unexplored Experience
Lost, The Complete Fourth Season: The Expanded Experience
Lost, The Complete Fifth Season: The Journey Back

*Lost: Complete Sixth & Final Season is due for release 8/24/10.

LOST Episode Guide

In addition to the biblical episode titles, there are several other Lost episode titles with literature/philosophy connections. These include “White Rabbit” and “Through the Looking Glass” from Carroll’s Alice books; “Catch-22”; “Tabula Rosa” (philosopher John Locke’s theory that the human mind is a blank slate at birth); and “The Man Behind the Curtain” and “There’s No Place Like Home” (The Wonderful Wizard of Oz).

Left Behind by Tim LaHaye and Jerry B. Jenkins SF LAHA/LT LAHA/CAS A JENK/eAudiobook
Selected people disappear mysteriously from a plane (à la Lost’s Ajira Airways flight) while others are left behind to cope with the beginnings of apocalypse.

The Little Prince by Antoine de Saint Exupéry J 398.2 DESA
A pilot crash lands in the Sahara Desert and encounters a little prince from a small planet who recounts his adventures in seeking the secret of what is important in life.

Stranger in a Strange Land by Robert Heinlein SF HEIN/CD BOOK HEIN/CAS A HEIN
A man born and raised on Mars arrives on Earth with extrasensory powers, and his visit brings into doubt the values and beliefs of Western society.

A Tale of Two Cities by Charles Dickens FIC DICK/eAudiobook
Two men love the same woman in the era of the French Revolution. The episode title references the separate societies of the Others and the crash survivors.

STILL LOST?

Lostpedia: www.lostpedia.com
Visit this extensive wiki on all things Lost to discover more literary connections, or to seek the answers to some of your lingering questions.

For more library pathfinders, go to www.bcplib.org/Good_Reads/Pathfinders.htm

Is there a subject you’d like to learn more about? If you have suggestions for future pathfinders, let me know!

Tracy Weikel, BCPL Reference Dept. reference@bcplib.org

With a Good Book

At a loss now that the TV series has ended?

See the show with new eyes by exploring some of the many books referenced on the show.
Cameo Appearances...

Many Lost characters—most notably Sawyer—are avid readers. These are some of the books that are read or otherwise seen on the show.

**After All These Years** by Susan Isaacs
FIC ISAA/CAS A ISAA
A schoolteacher finds her cheating spouse dead after their 25th anniversary bash and goes in search of the killer before she can be arrested for a crime she didn’t commit.

**Are You There God? It’s Me, Margaret** by Judy Blume J BLUM/CAS J BLUM
A classic teen novel where a girl struggles with issues of growing up and religion.

**Bad Twin** by Gary Troup MYS TROU/LT TROU
A private detective hired by Clifford Whitmore to find his “bad” identical twin discovers troubling secrets. This TV tie-in novel is supposed to be the unpublished manuscript found on the show amidst the wreckage of Oceanic 815.

**A Brief History of Time** by Stephen Hawking eAudiobook
A popular, landmark book on time travel and black holes.

**The Brothers Karamazov** by Fyodor Dostoyevsky FIC DOST
A Russian novel of family disputes and patricide that explores complex issues of God, free will, and morality.

**Catch-22** by Joseph Heller FIC HELL
Classic novel centered around a pilot in the U.S. Army during World War II. Characterized my multiple points of view and a non-chronological narrative full of flashbacks.

**The Chosen** by Chaim Potok FIC POTO/J POTO/CAS J POTO
The story of a friendship between two Jewish boys in 1940s Brooklyn.

**Evil Under the Sun** by Agatha Christie CAS A CHRI
Hercule Poirot investigates the murder of a young woman at a beach resort.

**Fahrenheit 451** by Ray Bradbury SF BRAD
Classic dystopian/science fiction novel in which people live hedonistic lives and critical thought is banned.

**The Fountainhead** by Ayn Rand FIC RAND
This story of a nonconformist young architect and his struggles with love and society examines the various archetypes of human character.

**Grimm’s Fairy Tales [The Annotated Brothers Grimm]** by Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm 398.2 GRIMM
The authentic, often violent fairy tales, including Hansel and Gretel, Cinderella, Rapunzel, etc., as well as less familiar tales. Selected edition includes nine tales “For Adults.”

**Hotel by Arthur Hailey** FIC HAIL
Several characters seeking redemption for their shady pasts find that their lives intertwine over five days at a luxury hotel in Louisiana.

**Lancelot by Walker Percy** FIC PERC
A lawyer confined to a mental institution reflects on his path to becoming a vengeful knight on a quest to destroy evil.

**Notes from Underground** by Fyodor Dostoyevsky FIC DOST
A short, existential novel examining the darkest depths of the human heart. Presented in the guise of a bitter “Underground Man’s” memoirs.

**An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge** by Ambrose Bierce eAudiobook
Short stories of mystery, fantasy, horror, romance, and the unknown. The title story relates the thoughts of a condemned man awaiting hanging during the Civil War.

**Of Mice and Men** by John Steinbeck FIC STEI/CD BOOK STEI
The poignant story of two Depression-era drifters in California.

**Our Mutual Friend** by Charles Dickens FIC DICK
A man fakes his own death to determine the character of his future wife. Dickens’s last, possibly darkest novel is a story of greed and corruption, class struggle, murder, and romance.

**The Pearl** by John Steinbeck FIC STEI/CD J BOOK STEI
This Steinbeck novella about a fisherman who discovers a fortune that brings him only tragedy could very well be the inspiration for the Pearl Dharma Station. Plus, there’s the similarity to Hurley’s cursed lottery winnings.

**Locke by Michael Ayers** 192 AYER
The “original” John Locke was a 17th century philosopher often credited with the modern conception of identity.

**The Social Contract** by Jean Jacques Rousseau 320.1 ROUS
Dantelle Rousseau’s likely namesake wrote this 1762 essay on the best way to organize a political community.

**Hume by Anthony Quinton** 192 QUIN
Desmond David Hume’s namesake, David Hume, was an 18th century Scottish philosopher who examined the psychological aspects of human nature.

**The Holy Bible** (various versions) 220.5 BIBL/220.52 BIBL/LT 220.5 BIBL/eAudiobook
The Bible is referenced throughout the series, including in character names like Jacob, Matthew Abbadon, Adam and Eve, and Christian Shephard. Plus, there’s Mr. Eko’s backstory, several Bible “cameos,” and episode titles like “Exodus,” “The 23rd Psalm,” “Numbers,” “Fire + Water,” and “316.”

Want to explore Lost’s philosophical influences in greater depth? Try Great Courses’ Great Minds of Western Intellectual Tradition series. Volume 4 includes lectures on Locke, Hume, and Rousseau. Volume 5 examines theologian Edmund Burke (also the name of Juliet’s ex-husband) and Kant/kegoard (his book Fear and Trembling, which examines the “Leap of faith” idea, was discovered at the Temple). LECTURE 182 GREA v.1–7