Hi Betsy,  
  
Thanks for getting back to me so quickly.  I do love that literature can (and should) be both entertaining and educational.  I wouldn't have become a high school English teacher if that wasn't the case...and I probably wouldn't read as much either.  I agree that Ovid's occupation as a professor lets him get away with more "lecturing" that a typical character.  I still would have appreciated a slightly more seamless interplay between fiction and information.  There were times when I almost heard an announcer in my head say, "We now interrupt this novel for a word from our sponsor."     
  
I wanted to let you know that I have made a point of reading all but the most recent of the Bellwether winners.  I started *Running the Rift* a few weeks ago but had to return it to the library before I could make much of a dent; it was this year's Lake Oswego Reads book so I am sure I will be able to get another copy soon. My favorite for sure is *Mudbound*.  If you haven't read it, I recommend it highly.  
  
I hope my students enjoyed their conversations with their book recommenders as much as I have!  Thanks again for your speedy and very thought-provoking replies.  
  
Happy Reading,  
Elana

**From:** Betsy Bailey  
**Sent:** Friday, April 05, 2013 9:37 AM  
**To:** Elana Cohn-Rozansky  
**Subject:** RE: Flight Behavior #3

Hi Elana:

I also had some mixed feelings about the storyline. Like you, I really couldn’t believe the “twist” regarding Dellarobia’s mother’s-in-law first child.  It came too suddenly and seemed to me to be a very “soap opera-ish” way to “explain” her interactions with her family and the minister.

While I agree that Ovid does sound like a lecturer, it rang true to me because he is a professor and he saw Dellarobia as the learner she is.  I actually really like that Kingsolver “delivers information” that reflects her personal commitment to the environment, and as you know, she has done so in other novels as well.  In *Animal Dreams*, the main character Codi is a high school biology teacher who urges her students to take a stand about pollution in their town, and in *Prodigal Summer* there’s a character who “lectures” others in their town about saving the chestnut trees.  While the passages in which characters express their stands on the environment may not be Kingsolver’s most beautiful writing, I do love her point of view.

I also read the Slate review and mentioned it to my son.  He reminded me that about ten years ago, Barbara Kingsolver established the Bellwether Prize (www.bellwetherprize.org/info.html), a literary prize which gives financial support to unpublished writers who deal with just those issues. After reading your email, I read a little more about the Bellwether and see that Kingsolver states that the purpose of the prize is to "encourage writers, publishers, and readers to consider how fiction engages visions of social change and human justice.”

It has been wonderful having a “book club” with you and hope we continue to discuss books we have read.

Betsy

**From:** Elana Cohn-Rozansky   
**Sent:** Thursday, April 04, 2013 9:21 PM  
**To:** Betsy Bailey  
**Subject:** Flight Behavior #3

Hi Betsy,  
  
I am hoping that you will have time to respond to just one more email about Barbara Kingsolver's *Flight Behavior*...  
  
As you probably remember, we previously discussed the novel's characters and the author's use of language.  It makes sense to move on to the story-line which is definitely intriguing, but also occasionally contrived or overly preachy for my tastes.  For example, as plot twists go, I had a difficult time accepting Dellarobia's mother-in-law's revelation about the son she gave up for adoption (contrived) and felt that there were several times when Ovid the scientist sounded more like a lecturer on climate change than a well-developed character (preachy).  I recently read a review of *Flight Behavior* in "Slate" which called the book "fiction that largely serves to deliver information."  I think this sums up my problem with the story line and why I found the book so much less satisfying than other Kingsolver novels.  
  
I am wondering how you felt about some of the plot twists and whether you thought that Kingsolver successfully meshed a good, compelling story with her agenda to teach her readers about the issues of climate change or whether the "information" ultimately dominated the "fiction."    
  
Looking forward to your response!  
Elana