

The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie

The classic novel is a great read whether you know Edinburgh or not, and also whether or not you have read the book before. It has survived the test of time and is as relevant today as it ever was. The girls are pupils at the Marcia Blaine School for Girls in Edinburgh in the 1930s and are part of 'The Brodie Set'. Miss Jean Brodie is their teacher and at the same time is an ardent supporter of the Fascist movement in Italy where she holidays.

The best-known lines from the book are that the girls in the set are (according to their teacher) *la creme de la creme*... Also Miss Brodie often advises them that 'Speech is silver but silence is golden.'

It was written by Spark in 1961. She was a Scottish author born in Edinburgh in 1918, and had published several other novels before this one was published. Ultimately Muriel Spark settled in Italy so whether this is a quasi autobiographical novel is open to conjecture.

The book was made into a film in 1968 starring Maggie Smith in the lead role. She was marvellous!

Private education is one of the main themes in the book and remains the way that a large percentage of children in the Capital are educated.

The New York Times carries an excerpt from Martin Stannard's biography of Muriel Spark [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#), clearly demonstrating how important an author they consider her to have been.