

Book Club Kits

If you belong to a book discussion group, or would like to start one, you're invited to check out our selection of Book Club Kits! Each kit contains 8 copies of a title selected by our librarians, along with a folder containing book discussion questions, author biography, and book reviews. The kits are checked out to one person who is responsible for all of the materials. The kits check out for 6 weeks and may not be renewed or placed on hold.

New kits will be added throughout the year.

Single copies of books may not be checked out from a kit.

Kits must be returned only to the Novi Public Library.

Return the kit to the circulation desk as they will not fit through the drop box.

Book Club Kits must be returned in their entirety. Items cannot be returned separately.

Incomplete kits will not be accepted and will incur fines once the due date is reached.

Overdue Book Club Kits will be fined \$1.00 a day to a maximum of \$25.00.

Replacement cost of an entire kit is \$100.00. Replacement cost of the individual items will depend on the cost of each item.

Brief Synopses of Available Book Club Kits

Fiction

Arranged by Author's Last Name

Americanah by Chimamanda Adichie

Separated by 9/11 and its consequences, Nigerian lovers Ifemelu and Obinze face new challenges a world apart as Ifemelu faces racism in the United States and Obinze heads for a dangerous life in London. Fifteen years after the military dictatorship that eventually gave way to a democratic Nigeria, now-wealthy Obinze and successful race blogger Ifemelu reunite and embrace the love that once made their lives worth living as they face a changed Nigeria.

Life After Life by Kate Atkinson

Ursula Todd is not immortal--not exactly, anyway. She first dies before she can take her first breath. Born again, she then lives and dies many times throughout the years as World War II draws ever closer. With the fateful war approaching, Ursula may be the only one with the power to change the world.

A Man Called Ove by Fredrik Backman

At 59, Ove is a grumble Gus of the first degree. Rules are made to be followed, signs are meant to be obeyed, and don't even get him started about computers and mobile phones. In truth, Ove has been this way his whole life, but he's gotten worse in the last four years since his wife, Sonia, died, taking with her all the color in a world Ove sees as black-and-white. Ove has decided life without Sonia is not worth living and plans to join her in the next world. But a young couple and their two children (a third is on the way) move in next door, his oldest friend and most feared enemy is about to be forcibly removed to a nursing home, and a street-scarred cat insinuates itself into his life. Suddenly, Ove's suicide plans get delayed as he helps solve neighborly crises large and small. Though Ove's dark mission mitigates any treachery upstaging by animals and small children, readers seeking feel-good tales with a message will rave about the rantings of this solitary old man with a singular outlook.

The Aviator's Wife by Melanie Benjamin

The Lindberghs let nothing spoil their fairytale marriage, not even an infamous kidnapping. Benjamin explores the couple's marriage through a novel that recounts the love between Charles Lindbergh and his quiet wife, Anne. Witness their struggle to keep love alive as the press keeps track of their every move.

The Last Time I Saw You by Elizabeth Berg

To each of the men and women in "The last time I saw you", this reunion means something different. A last opportunity to say something long left unsaid, an escape from the bleaker realities of everyday life, a means to save a marriage on the rocks, or an opportunity to bond with a slightly estranged daughter, if only over what her mother should wear.

Away by Amy Bloom

Arriving in America alone after her family is destroyed in a Russian pogrom, Lillian Leyb receives word that her daughter Sophie might still be alive and embarks on a risky odyssey that takes her from New York's Lower East Side to Siberia to find the missing girl.

March by Geraldine Brooks

As the North reels under a series of defeats during the first years of the Civil War, one man leaves behind his family to aid the Union cause. His experiences will change his marriage and challenge his ardently held beliefs.

War Brides by Helen Bryan

As war moves ever closer, the sleepy English village of Crowmarsh Priors settles into a new sort of normal: Evacuees from London are billeted in local homes. The nightly German air raids become grimly mundane. Rationing curtails every comfort. Men leave to fight and die. And five women forge a bond of friendship that will change their lives forever in this engrossing novel of loyalty, loss, and love in the shadow of World War II.

The Language of Flowers by Vanessa Diffenbaugh

The Victorian language of flowers was used to convey romantic expressions: honeysuckle for devotion, asters for patience, and red roses for love. But for Victoria Jones, it's been more useful in communicating mistrust and solitude. After a childhood spent in the foster-care system, she is unable to get close to anybody, and her only connection to the world is through flowers and their meanings. Now eighteen and emancipated from the system with nowhere to go, Victoria realizes she has a gift for helping others through the flowers she chooses for them. But an unexpected encounter with a mysterious stranger has her questioning what's been missing in her life. And when she's forced to confront a painful secret from her past, she must decide whether it's worth risking everything for a second chance at happiness.

Middlesex by Jeffrey Eugenides

Calliope's friendship with a classmate and her sense of identity are compromised by the adolescent discovery that she is a hermaphrodite, a situation with roots in her grandparent's desperate struggle for survival in the 1920s.

Every Man Dies Alone by Hans Fallada

Based on a true story, this sweeping saga tells the tale of a working class couple in Berlin who decide to take a stand against the Nazis. More than an edge-of-your-seat thriller, more than a moving romance, even more than literature of the highest order, it's a deeply moving story of two people who stand up for what's right, and for each other.

One Thousand White Women by Jim Fergus

An Indian request in 1854 for 1,000 white brides to ensure peace is secretly approved by the U.S. government in this alternate-history novel. Their journey west is described by May Dodd, a high-society woman released from an asylum where she was incarcerated by her family for an affair.

Madame Bovary by Gustave Flaubert

Emma Bovary becomes bored with her life and embarks on an affair.

The Turner House by Angela Flournoy

The Turners have lived on Yarrow Street for over fifty years. Their house has seen thirteen children grown and gone—and some returned; it has seen the arrival of grandchildren, the fall of Detroit's East Side, and the loss of a father. The house still stands despite abandoned lots, an embattled city, and the inevitable shift outward to the suburbs. But now, as ailing matriarch Viola finds herself forced to leave her home and move in with her eldest son, the family discovers that the house is worth just a tenth of its mortgage. The Turner children are called home to decide its fate and to reckon with how each of their pasts haunts—and shapes—their family's future. Praised by Ayana Mathis as "utterly moving" and "un-putdownable," *The Turner House* brings us a colorful, complicated brood full of love and pride, sacrifice and unlikely inheritances. It's a striking examination of the price we pay for our dreams and futures, and the ways in which our families bring us home.

Dark Places by Gillian Flynn

When Libby Day's mother and two older sisters were slaughtered in the family's Kansas farmhouse, it was seven-year-old Libby's testimony that sent her 15-year-old brother, Ben, to prison for life. Desperate for cash 24 years later, Libby reluctantly agrees to meet members of the Kill Club, true crime enthusiasts who bicker over famous cases. She's shocked to learn most of them believe Ben is innocent and the real killer is still on the loose. Though initially interested only in making a quick buck hocking family memorabilia, Libby is soon drawn into the club's pseudo-investigation, and begins to question what exactly she saw—or didn't see—the night of the tragedy.

Bloodroot by Amy Greene

Set in Tennessee's Smoky Mountains, it's told largely in tandem voices that keep watchful eyes on Myra Lamb. She is a child of the mountain, tied to the land in ways that mystify and enchant those around her. There's magic to Myra--perhaps because she has the remarkable blue eyes foretold by a nearly-forgotten family curse--but little fantasy to her life. *Bloodroot* is as much about the Lambs as it is about a place, one that becomes ever more vivid as generations form, break free, and knit back together. Its characters speak plainly but true, they are resilient and flawed and beautiful, and there is a near instant empathy in reading their stories, which--even in their most visceral moments--are alluring and wonderful.

Five Quarters of the Orange by Joanne Harris

A sensual novel follows a woman as she returns to the French village where she lived as a girl during the German occupation.

Our Souls at Night by Kent Haruf

A spare yet eloquent, bittersweet yet inspiring story of a man and a woman who, in advanced age, come together to wrestle with the events of their lives and their hopes for the imminent future.

Loving Frank by Nancy Horan

Fact and fiction blend in a historical novel that chronicles the relationship between seminal architect Frank Lloyd Wright and Mamah Cheney, from their meeting, when they were each married to another, to the clandestine affair that shocked Chicago society.

The Snow Child by Eowyn Ivey

Alaska, 1920: a brutal place to homestead, and especially tough for recent arrivals Jack and Mabel. Childless, they are drifting apart--he breaking under the weight of the work of the farm; she crumbling from loneliness and despair. In a moment of levity during the season's first snowfall, they build a child out of snow. The next morning the snow child is gone--but they glimpse a young, blonde-haired girl running through the trees. This little girl, who calls herself Faina, seems to be a child of the woods. She hunts with a red fox at her side, skims lightly across the snow, and somehow survives alone in the Alaskan wilderness. As Jack and Mabel struggle to understand this child who could have stepped from the pages of a fairy tale, they come to love her as their own daughter. But in this beautiful, violent place things are rarely as they appear, and what they eventually learn about Faina will transform all of them.

The Orphan Master's Son by Adam Johnson

Korea, the most secretive country in the world, is where an orphan rises up through the ranks of the DPRK army as a tunnel soldier, to become a professional kidnapper, military intelligence officer, and--for a short time--a rival to the Dear Leader, Kim Jon Il. Both gripping and suspenseful, it is also a love story.

Mister Pip by Lloyd Jones

On a copper-rich tropical island shattered by war, on which survival is a daily struggle, eccentric Mr. Watts, the only white man left after the other teachers flee, spends his day reading to the local children from Charles Dickens's classic "Great Expectations".

The Invention of Wings by Sue Monk Kidd

Inspired by the true story of early-nineteenth-century abolitionist and suffragist Sarah Grimké, Kidd paints a moving portrait of two women inextricably linked by the horrors of slavery. Sarah, daughter of a wealthy South Carolina plantation owner, exhibits an independent spirit and strong belief in the equality of all. Thwarted from her dreams of becoming a lawyer, she struggles throughout life to find an outlet for her convictions. Handful, a slave in the Grimké household, displays a sharp intellect and brave, rebellious disposition. She maintains a compliant exterior, while planning for a brighter future. Told in first person, the chapters alternate between the two main characters' perspectives, as we follow their unlikely friendship (characterized by both respect and resentment) from childhood to middle age. While their pain and struggle cannot be equated, both women strive to be set free—Sarah from the bonds of patriarchy and Southern bigotry, and Handful from the inhuman bonds of slavery. Kidd is a master storyteller, and, with smooth and graceful prose, she immerses the reader in the lives of these fascinating women as they navigate religion, family drama, slave revolts, and the abolitionist movement.

The Orphan Train by Christina Baker Kline

Molly Ayer's only future lies in the past as she helps an old woman sort through an attic full of memories while worrying where she'll end up once she turns 18 and is locked out of her foster home. As Molly helps elderly Vivian Daly clean out her attic and sift through memories, growing closer to the old woman, a troublesome past reveals itself. It's time for Molly to learn about the Orphan Train.

The History of Love by Nicole Krauss

Sixty years after a book's publication, its author remembers his lost love and missing son, while a teenage girl named for one of the book's characters seeks her namesake, as well as a cure for her widowed mother's loneliness.

The Namesake by Jhumpa Lahiri

A portrait of the immigrant experience follows the Ganguli family from their traditional life in India through their arrival in Massachusetts in the late 1960s and their difficult melding into an American way of life.

Angry Housewives Eating Bon-Bons by Lorna Landvik

From the initial formation of The Freesia Court Book Club and over the course of the next thirty years, five women in small-town Minnesota share the events, triumphs, tragedies, hardships, joys, and sorrows of their lives.

Station Eleven by Emily St. John Mandel

A flight from Russia lands in middle America, its passengers carrying a virus that explodes “like a neutron bomb over the surface of the earth.” In a blink, the world as we know it collapses. “No more ballgames played under floodlights,” Emily St. John Mandel writes in this smart and sober homage to life’s smaller pleasures, brutally erased by an apocalypse. “No more trains running under the surface of cities ... No more cities ... No more Internet ... No more avatars.” Survivors become scavengers, roaming the ravaged landscape or clustering in pocket settlements, some of them welcoming, some dangerous. What’s touching about the world of *Station Eleven* is its ode to what survived, in particular the music and plays performed for wasteland communities by a roving Shakespeare troupe, the Traveling Symphony, whose members form a wounded family of sorts. The story shifts deftly between the fraught post-apocalyptic world and, twenty years earlier, just before the apocalypse, the death of a famous actor, which has a rippling effect across the decades. It’s heartbreaking to watch the troupe strive for more than mere survival.

A Constellation of Vital Phenomena by Anthony Marra

A failed physician and a bombed-out hospital offer hunted eight-year-old Havaa a sliver of hope when Russian forces kidnap her father from a Chechnya village in 2004. Five days will decide the girl and the physician’s fates as they search for answers among the shattered remnants of the lives they once led.

Beatrice and Virgil by Yann Martel

A fable-type story with iceberg-deep dimensions reaching far below the surface of its general premise. Henry, a young author, has written a book that has been successfully received, but the idea underpinning his follow-up work—a combination of fiction and essays thematically linked by his concept that writers shy away from fictional depictions of the Holocaust in favor of strict documentation—results in a manuscript deemed unacceptable by his publisher. Henry and his wife then flee their home country of Canada to live in “one of those great cities of the world”. One day Henry receives a packet of materials obviously sent by someone familiar with his once-celebrated status, and in tracking down the source of the packet, Henry encounters what will turn out to be a life-threatening acquaintance with a taxidermist, whose personality is as enigmatic as his stuffed creatures are haunting.

New World Monkeys by Nancy Mauro

In this unabashedly eccentric debut, a young couple with a troubled marriage make the fateful decision to summer in a decaying upstate New York house, leading to a series of bizarre events. First, their car slams into a wild boar, and Lily, seeing it squealing in pain, smashes its skull with a tire iron. But when the two arrive in town, they realize the boar—Sovereign of the Deep Wood—was the town mascot and the beloved pet of a nasty local named Skinner, who is eager to find the culprits. Then Duncan uncovers a gravestone and a human bone in the house’s backyard, and the two barely speaking spouses excavate the skeleton and ponder a decades-old whodunit.

Circling the Sun by Paula McLain

Brought to Kenya from England as a child and then abandoned by her mother, Beryl is raised by both her father and the native Kipsigis tribe who share his estate. Her unconventional upbringing transforms Beryl into a bold young woman with a fierce love of all things wild and an inherent understanding of nature's delicate balance. But even the wild child must grow up, and when everything Beryl knows and trusts dissolves, she is catapulted into a string of disastrous relationships. Beryl forges her own path as a horse trainer, and her uncommon style attracts the eye of the Happy Valley set, a decadent, bohemian community of European expats who also live and love by their own set of rules. But it's the ruggedly charismatic Denys Finch Hatton who ultimately helps Beryl navigate the uncharted territory of her own heart. The intensity of their love reveals Beryl's truest self and her fate: to fly. Set against the majestic landscape of early-twentieth-century Africa, McLain's powerful tale reveals the extraordinary adventures of a woman before her time, the exhilaration of freedom and its cost, and the tenacity of the human spirit.

The Song of Achilles by Madeline Miller

Betrayal, ardor, war, and prophecies--in *The Song of Achilles*, author Madeline Miller brings together everything I love about *The Iliad* without the labor of epic poetry. In this new twist on the Trojan War story, Patroclus and Achilles are the quintessential mismatched pair--a mortal underdog exiled in shame and a glorious demigod revered by all--but what would a novel of ancient Greece be without star-crossed love? Miller includes other good tragic bits--foreknowledge of death, ruthless choices that pit pride and reputation against the lives of innocents, the folly of men and gods--and through her beautiful writing my spine chilled in the presence of Achilles' mother, the sea goddess Thetis, and I became a bystander in the battlefield of Troy awash with blood, exaltation, and despair. *The Song of Achilles* infuses the essence of Homer with modern storytelling in a combination that is utterly absorbing and gratifying.

Big Little Lies by Liane Moriarty

Pirriwee Public's annual school Trivia Night has ended in a shocking riot. One parent is dead. The school principal is horrified. As police investigate what appears to have been a tragic accident, signs begin to indicate that this devastating death might have been cold-blooded murder. Bestselling author Liane Moriarty deftly explores the reality of parenting and playground politics, ex-husbands and ex-wives, and fractured families.

What Alice Forgot by Liane Moriarty

Alice Love is twenty-nine years old, madly in love with her husband, and pregnant with their first child. So imagine her surprise when, after a fall, she comes to on the floor of a gym (a gym! she HATES the gym!) and discovers that she's actually thirty-nine, has three children, and is in the midst of an acrimonious divorce. A knock on the head has misplaced ten years of her life, and Alice isn't sure she likes who she's become. It turns out, though, that forgetting might be the most memorable thing that has ever happened to Alice.

The Secret Keeper by Kate Morton

Laurel Nicholson is a teenager when she witnesses a shocking crime: her gentle, kind mother, Dorothy, kills a man. It becomes a family secret that Laurel never divulges or tries to fathom until five decades later, when Dorothy is on her deathbed, and Laurel finds a photograph of her mother with an old friend, snapped back in 1941, when Dorothy was barely out of her teens. As Laurel begins to dig, her burning questions become, who was Vivien Jenkins, and why was she once so important to Dorothy? With the narrative shifting between Laurel, Dorothy, Vivien, and Jimmy, a man who also profoundly affected Dorothy's life long ago, both reader and Laurel breathlessly hurtle into an astounding family secret that unfolds slowly and temptingly. Despite some loose threads and rather too leisurely pacing, this is likely to keep readers reading into the wee hours.

Me Before You by Jojo Moyes

Louisa Clark isn't much for stepping out and taking a risk, so when a sorely-needed job leads to feelings she societal changes going on all around her. But Lydia suffers from pressure that has nothing to do with tuning out and turning on. Her father is an American born of first-generation Chinese immigrants, and his ethnicity, and hers, make them conspicuous in any setting. Her mother is white, and their interracial marriage raises eyebrows and some intrusive charges of miscegenation. More troubling, however, is her mother's frustration at having given up medical school for motherhood, and how she blindly and selfishly insists that Lydia follow her road not taken. The cracks in Lydia's perfect-daughter foundation grow slowly can't explain, Louisa is as shocked as anybody to find herself trying to convince a big-living Will Traynor that life is still worth living. A motorcycle accident paralyzed Will, and as Louisa's feelings for the moody man grow, she finds herself desperate to keep him from making a big mistake.

Everything I Never Told You by Celeste Ng

A teenage girl goes missing and is later found to have drowned in a nearby lake, and suddenly a once tight-knit family unravels in unexpected ways. As the daughter of a college professor and his stay-at-home wife in a small Ohio town in the 1970s, Lydia Lee is already unwittingly part of the greater but erupt suddenly and tragically, and her death threatens to destroy her parents and deeply scar her siblings. Tantalizingly thrilling, Ng's emotionally complex debut novel captures the tension between cultures and generations with the deft touch of a seasoned writer.

A Tale for the Time Being by Ruth Ozeki

Sixteen-year-old Nao has just one thing left to do before she defeats the bullying and the loneliness and takes her life. She sets out to document a Buddhist nun who's over 100 years old; that nun happens to be her great grandmother. Meanwhile, a writer named Ruth finds a lunchbox full of mysterious items and quickly learns of Nao's quest.

The Tenderness of Wolves by Stef Penney

When her teenage son disappears in the aftermath of a brutal murder, a determined mother sets out from her snow-covered nineteenth-century settlement to find him, an effort that is hampered by vigilante groups and the harrowing forces of nature.

Nineteen Minutes by Jodi Picoult

In Sterling, New Hampshire, 17-year-old high school student Peter Houghton has endured years of verbal and physical abuse at the hands of classmates. His best friend, Josie Cormier, succumbed to peer pressure and now hangs out with the popular crowd that often instigates the harassment. One final incident of bullying sends Peter over the edge and leads him to commit an act of violence that forever changes the lives of Sterling's residents.

Sarah's Key by Tatiana De Rosnay

On the sixtieth anniversary of the 1942 roundup of Jews by the French police in the Vel d'Hiv section of Paris, American journalist Julia Jarmond is asked to write an article on this dark episode during World War II and embarks on investigation that leads her to long-hidden family secrets and to the ordeal of Sarah, a young girl caught up in the raid.

Miss Julia Speaks Her Mind by Ann B. Ross

Shortly after the death of her husband, a wealthy Southern widow is visited by an impoverished young woman with a small boy. A mistress? A son? Julia Springer can't believe it, only to discover that the whole town has known for years. But she will rise to the occasion when the boy is kidnaped.

The Shadow of the Wind by Carlos Ruiz Zafon

A boy named Daniel selects a novel from a library of rare books, enjoying it so much that he searches for the rest of the author's works, only to discover that someone is destroying every book the author has ever written.

Where'd You Go, Bernadette? By Maria Semple

Bernadette Fox is different things to different people. But, to her daughter Bee, 15, she's just Mom and her best friend. Then she disappears. This throws the family, and especially Bee, into crisis. To find her mother, Bee compiles e-mail messages, official documents, and secret correspondence.

The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society by Mary Ann Shaffer

In 1946, writer Juliet Ashton finds inspiration for her next book in her correspondence with a native of Guernsey, who tells her about the Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society, a book club born as an alibi during German occupation.

The Rosie Project by Graeme Simsion

Genetics professor Don Tillman's ordered, predictable life is thrown into chaos when love enters the equation in this immensely enjoyable novel. Never good with social cues, Don explains his difficulty empathizing with others, which he forthrightly says is a defining symptom of the autism spectrum, as a result of his brain simply being wired differently. Diagnosis is not the issue here, as the reader is rooting for Don as he searches for ways to fit in. With his fortieth birthday approaching, he designs a questionnaire to find a compatible female life partner using his overriding devotion to logic. But he finds his quest competing with the request of a woman to discover the identity of her biological father. The protagonist is passingly similar to that of Haddon's *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* (2003), but Simsion's first novel is not as dark, focusing instead on the humor and significance of what makes us human. Don is used

to causing amusement or consternation in others, but as his self-awareness and understanding grow, so do his efforts to behave more appropriately. Determined and unintentionally sweet, Don embarks on an optimistic and redemptive journey.

The Light between Oceans by ML Stedman

Tom Sherbourne minds the lighthouse on Janus Rock, an island off the coast of Australia. A World War I veteran with a strong sense of right and wrong, Tom leads a quiet life until he meets outgoing, bubbly Isabel. Eager for marriage and motherhood, she wins Tom's affections, and the two make a home on the island. After Isabel endures a pair of miscarriages, their hopes for a family dim--until a boat washes ashore bearing a dead man and a baby, whom Isabel wants to keep. Tom, concerned about the baby's mother, has doubts about the decision, but he guards their secret, and his silence has heartrending repercussions. Emotionally riveting, Stedman's powerful novel won't soon be forgotten by readers. It's a first-rate story and also a sensitive exploration of the ways in which loyalty and love shape individual lives.

The Help by Kathryn Stockett

Twenty-two-year-old Skeeter has just returned home after graduating from Ole Miss. She may have a degree, but it is 1962, Mississippi, and her mother will not be happy till Skeeter has a ring on her finger. Skeeter would normally find solace with her beloved maid Constantine, the woman who raised her, but Constantine has disappeared and no one will tell Skeeter where she has gone. Aibileen is a black maid, a wise, regal woman raising her seventeenth white child. Something has shifted inside her after the loss of her own son, who died while his bosses looked the other way. She is devoted to the little girl she looks after, though she knows both their hearts may be broken. Minny, Aibileen's best friend, is short, fat, and perhaps the sassiest woman in Mississippi. She can cook like nobody's business, but she can't mind her tongue, so she's lost yet another job. Minny finally finds a position working for someone too new to town to know her reputation. But her new boss has secrets of her own. Seemingly as different from one another as can be, these women will nonetheless come together for a clandestine project that will put them all at risk.

Olive Kitteridge by Elizabeth Strout

At the edge of the continent, in the small town of Crosby, Maine, lives Olive Kitteridge, a retired schoolteacher who deplores the changes in her town and in the world at large but doesn't always recognize the changes in those around her.

The Samurai's Garden by Gail Tsukiyami

In turbulent sixteenth-century Japan, orphaned Taro is taken in by a general serving the great warlord Takeda Shingen and grows up to become a samurai fighting for the enemies of his dead family.

Fragile by Lisa Unger

When a young girl goes missing, everyone is convinced she's a runaway, but Jones and Maggie aren't so sure. After all, years ago, another girl named Sarah disappeared, and everyone treated her as a runaway until they found her body. Investigating Charlene's disappearance and trying to figure out exactly what happened shakes up the town of The Hollows, and in the process, long-buried secrets begin to come to light.

Luncheon of the Boating Party by Susan Vreeland

Renoir is inspired to paint "Luncheon of the boating party" when his other work is criticized by Emile Zola, and while doing so is drawn into lives of the thirteen people featured in it as they enjoy a Parisian summer during the late 1800s.

The Age of Miracles by Karen Thompson Walker

On an ordinary Saturday, Julia awakes to discover that something has happened to the rotation of the earth. The days and nights are growing longer and longer, gravity is affected, the birds, the tides, human behavior and cosmic rhythms are thrown into disarray. In a world of danger and loss, Julia faces surprising developments in herself, and her personal world—divisions widening between her parents, strange behavior by Hannah and other friends, the vulnerability of first love, a sense of isolation, and a rebellious new strength.

Montana, 1948 by Larry Watson

Story of the events of the summer of the author's 12th year, which altered his view of his family and the world forever.

The Interestings by Meg Wolitzer

Creative springs run dry for some of the six teens who meet and forge a lasting bond at a summer camp for the arts. Follow their lives as they grow through adulthood, following dreams and dealing with disappointment.

The Storied Life of A.J. Fikry by Gabrielle Zevin

In this sweet, uplifting homage to bookstores, Zevin perfectly captures the joy of connecting people and books. A. J. Fikry, the cantankerous owner of Island Books, is despondent after losing his beloved wife and witnessing the ever-declining number of sales at his small, quirky bookstore. In short order, he loses all patience with the new Knightly Press sales rep, his prized rare edition of Tamerlane is stolen, and someone leaves a baby at his store. That baby immediately steals A. J.'s heart and unleashes a dramatic transformation. Suddenly, the picture-book section is overflowing with new titles, and the bookstore becomes home to a burgeoning number of book clubs. With business on the uptick and love in his heart, A. J. finds himself becoming an essential new part of his longtime community, going so far as to woo the aforementioned sales rep (who loves drinking Queequeg cocktails at the Pequod Restaurant). Filled with interesting characters, a deep knowledge of bookselling, wonderful critiques of classic titles, and very funny depictions of book clubs and author events, this will prove irresistible to book lovers everywhere.

Non-Fiction

Arranged by Call Number

Annie's Ghosts by Steve Luxenberg (306.875 Luxenberg)

When Washington Post senior editor Luxenberg's mother passed away, the family discovered that she had a sister, Annie, who was confined to a mental institution in 1940, when she was 21. Along with 5000 others, Annie's existence was treated as a shameful secret, until she was nearly forgotten entirely. Luxenberg uses his tools as an investigative journalist to unearth the circumstances surrounding Annie's commitment and in doing so sheds welcome light on a heartbreaking chapter in American history. A fascinating detective story that will appeal to anyone who has ever had a family member with mental illness or had their assumptions about family tested by a secret revealed.

Arc of Justice by Kevin Boyle (345.73 Boyle)

Follows the 1925 murder trial of African-American doctor Ossian Sweet, who was accused of murdering a white person during a mob attack on his home, and includes a history of the Sweet family and a portrait of his attorney, Clarence Darrow.

Picking Cotton by Jennifer Thompson-Cannino, et al. (362.883 Thompsoncannino)

In 1984, Thompson-Cannino, a 22-year-old white, North Carolina college student, was viciously raped by a black intruder and identified Cotton as her attacker. Her testimony led to his conviction and a sentence of life imprisonment, though DNA evidence exonerated him 11 years later. Unbelievably, the two formed a genuine friendship and now together advocate for judicial reform.

The Devil in the White City by Erik Larson (364.152 Larson)

An account of the Chicago World's Fair of 1893 relates the stories of two men who shaped the history of the event--architect Daniel H. Burnham, who coordinated its construction, and serial killer Herman Mudgett.

Animal, Vegetable, Miracle by Barbara Kingsolver (641.097 Kingsolver)

Follows the author's family's efforts to live on locally- and home-grown foods, an endeavor through which they learned lighthearted truths about food production and the connection between health and diet.

The Boys in the Boat by Daniel James Brown (797.12 Brown)

Centered around the life of Joe Rantz—a farmboy from the Pacific Northwest who was literally abandoned as a child—and set during the Great Depression, *The Boys in the Boat* is a character-driven story with a natural crescendo that will have you racing to the finish. In 1936, the University of Washington's eight-oar crew team raced its way to the Berlin Olympics for an opportunity to challenge the greatest in the world. How this team, largely composed of rowers from “foggy coastal villages, damp dairy farms, and smoky lumber towns all over the state,” managed to work together and sacrifice toward their goal of defeating Hitler's feared racers is half the story. The other half is equally fascinating, as Brown seamlessly weaves in the story of

crew itself. This is fast-paced and emotional nonfiction about determination, bonds built by teamwork, and what it takes to achieve glory.

I Feel Bad About My Neck by Nora Ephron (814.54 Ephron)

A collection of essays offers a humorous look at the ups and downs of being a woman of a certain age, discussing the tribulations of maintenance and trying to stop the clock, menopause, and empty nests.

An Invisible Thread by Laura Schroff and Alex Tresniowski (974.71 Schroff)

She was a successful ad sales rep in Manhattan. He was a homeless, eleven-year-old panhandler on the street. He asked for spare change; she kept walking. But then something stopped her in her tracks, and she went back. And she continued to go back, again and again. They met up nearly every week for years and built an unexpected, life-changing friendship that has today spanned almost three decades.

Biographies—Arranged by Last Name

Falling Leaves by Adaline Yen Mah

The daughter of a wealthy Hong Kong businessman describes her very difficult childhood and the psychological abuse she suffered at the hands of her stepmother.

The Color of Water by James McBride

A young African American man describes growing up as one of twelve children of a white mother and black father, and discusses his mother's contributions to his life and his confusion over his own identity.

The Tender Bar by J.R. Moehringer

In a memoir of growing up with a single mother, the author describes how he received valuable life lessons and friendship from an assortment of characters at the neighborhood bar, who provided him with a kind of fatherhood by committee.

Wild: From Lost to Found on the Pacific Crest Trail by Cheryl Strayed

At twenty-two, Cheryl Strayed thought she had lost everything. In the wake of her mother's death, her family scattered and her own marriage was soon destroyed. Four years later, with nothing more to lose, she made the most impulsive decision of her life: to hike the Pacific Crest Trail from the Mojave Desert through California and Oregon to Washington State—and to do it alone. She had no experience as a long-distance hiker, and the trail was little more than "an idea, vague and outlandish and full of promise." But it was a promise of piecing back together a life that had come undone.

The Glass Castle by Jeanette Walls

The child of an alcoholic father and an eccentric artist mother discusses her family's nomadic upbringing, during which she and her siblings fended for themselves while their parents outmaneuvered bill collectors and the authorities.

The Kids are All Right by Diana Welch

In a memoir rendered eerily dry and scattered by emotional distance, the four Welch children, orphaned in their youth in the mid-1980s, recount by turns their memories and impressions of that painful time. Growing up in an affluent community of Bedford, N.Y., to a glamorous mother and a handsome father who was the head of an oil company, the children—Amanda (born in 1965), Liz (1969), Dan (1971) and Diana (1977)—were devastated first by the sudden death of their father in a car accident in 1983, followed by their mother three and a half years later after a long, wrenching bout with cancer.

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