

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.

New kits will be added throughout the year.

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

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

Kits may be returned to other TLN libraries.

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. 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 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 Vanishing Half* by Brit Bennett**

The Vignes twin sisters will always be identical. But after growing up together in a small, southern black community and running away at age sixteen, it's not just the shape of their daily lives that is different as adults, it's everything: their families, their communities, their racial identities. Many years later, one sister lives with her black daughter in the same southern town she once tried to escape. The other passes for white, and her white husband knows nothing of her past. Still, even separated by so many miles and just as many lies, the fates of the twins remain intertwined. What will happen to the next generation, when their own daughters' storylines intersect?

***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.

***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.

***American Dirt* by Jeanine Cummins**

Forced to flee their lives and home in Acapulco, Mexico when a drug cartel leader targets them, Lydia Quixano Pérez and eight-year-old Luca soon find themselves miles and worlds away from their comfortable middle-class existence. Instantly transformed into migrants, Lydia and Luca ride la bestia—trains that make their way north toward the United States, which is the only place Javier's reach doesn't extend. As they join the countless people trying to reach el norte, Lydia soon sees that everyone is running from something. But what exactly are they running to?

***The Language of Flowers* by Vanessa Diffenbaugh**

After a childhood spent in the foster-care system, Victoria Jones 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.

***All the Light We Cannot See* by Anthony Doerr**

WINNER OF THE PULITZER PRIZE

From the highly acclaimed, multiple award-winning Anthony Doerr, the beautiful, stunningly ambitious New York Times bestseller about a blind French girl and a German boy whose paths collide in occupied France as both try to survive the devastation of World War II.

***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.

***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.

***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.

***Still Alice* by Lisa Genova**

Alice Howland, happily married with three grown children and a house on the Cape, is a celebrated Harvard professor at the height of her career when she notices a forgetfulness creeping into her life. As confusion starts to cloud her thinking and her memory begins to fail her, she receives a devastating diagnosis: early onset Alzheimer's disease.

***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.

***Homegoing* by Yaa Gyasi**

Two half-sisters, Effia and Esi, are born into different villages in eighteenth-century Ghana. Effia is married off to an Englishman and lives in comfort in the palatial rooms of Cape Coast Castle. Unbeknownst to Effia, her sister, Esi, is imprisoned beneath her in the castle's dungeons, sold with thousands of others into the Gold Coast's booming slave trade, and shipped off to America. One thread follows Effia's descendants through centuries of warfare in Ghana, as the Fante and Asante nations wrestle with the slave trade and British colonization. The other thread follows Esi and her children into America. From the plantations of the South to the Civil War, from the coal mines of Pratt City, Alabama, to the jazz clubs and dope houses of twentieth-century Harlem, right up through the present day, *Homegoing* makes history visceral.

***Exit West* by Mohsin Hamid**

In a country teetering on the brink of civil war, two young people meet—sensual, fiercely independent Nadia and gentle, restrained Saeed. They embark on a furtive love affair, thrust into premature intimacy by the unrest roiling their city. When it explodes, turning familiar streets into a patchwork of checkpoints and bomb blasts, they begin to hear whispers about doors—doors that can whisk people far away, if perilously and for a price. As violence and the threat of violence escalate, Nadia and Saeed decide that they no longer have a choice. Leaving their homeland and their old lives behind, they find a door and step through. *Exit West* is an epic compressed into a slender page-turner—both completely of our time and for all time, Mohsin Hamid's most ambitious and electrifying novel yet.

***The Nightingale* by Kristin Hannah**

Viann and Isabelle have always been close despite their differences. Younger, bolder sister Isabelle lives in Paris while Viann lives a quiet and content life in the French countryside with her husband Antoine and their daughter. When World War II strikes and Antoine is sent off to fight, Viann and Isabelle's father sends Isabelle to help her older sister cope. As the war progresses, it's not only the sisters' relationship that is tested, but also their strength and their individual senses of right and wrong. With life as they know it changing in unbelievably horrific ways, Viann and Isabelle will find themselves facing frightening situations and responding in ways they never thought possible as bravery and resistance take different forms in each of their actions.

***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.

***Eleanor Oliphant is Completely Fine* by Gail Honeyman**

Meet Eleanor Oliphant: she struggles with appropriate social skills and tends to say exactly what she's thinking. That, combined with her unusual appearance (scarred cheek, tendency to wear the same clothes year in, year out), means that Eleanor has become a creature of habit (to say

the least) and a bit of a loner. Nothing is missing in her carefully timetabled life of avoiding social interactions, where weekends are punctuated by frozen pizza, vodka, and phone chats with Mummy. But everything changes when Eleanor meets Raymond, the bumbling and deeply unhygienic IT guy from her office. When she and Raymond together save Sammy, an elderly gentleman who has fallen on the sidewalk, the three become the kind of friends who rescue each other from the lives of isolation they have each been living. And it is Raymond's big heart that will ultimately help Eleanor find the way to repair her own profoundly damaged one.

***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 is breaking under the weight of the work of the farm; she is 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.

***News of the World* by Paulette Jiles**

In the aftermath of the Civil War, an aging itinerant news reader agrees to transport a young captive of the Kiowa back to her people in this exquisitely rendered, morally complex, multilayered novel of historical fiction from the author of *Enemy Women* that explores the boundaries of family, responsibility, honor, and trust.

***An American Marriage* by Tayari Jones**

Newlyweds Celestial and Roy are the embodiment of both the American dream and the new South. He is a young executive, and she is an artist on the brink of an exciting career. But as they settle into the routine of their life together, they are ripped apart by circumstances neither could have imagined. Roy is arrested and sentenced to twelve years for a crime Celestial knows he didn't commit. Though fiercely independent, Celestial finds herself bereft and unmoored, taking comfort in Andre, her childhood friend, and best man at their wedding. As Roy's time in prison passes, she is unable to hold on to the love that has been her center. After five years, Roy's conviction is suddenly overturned, and he returns to Atlanta ready to resume their life together.

***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. 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.

***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.

***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 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. 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.

***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.

***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**

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, and the folly of men and gods. *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. 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.

***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. Lydia Lee is already unwittingly part of the greater societal changes going on all around her. 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 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.

***Little Fires Everywhere* by Celeste Ng**

In Shaker Heights, a placid, progressive suburb of Cleveland, everything is planned - from the layout of the winding roads, to the colors of the houses, to the successful lives its residents will go on to lead. And no one embodies this spirit more than Elena Richardson, whose guiding principle is playing by the rules. Enter Mia Warren - an enigmatic artist and single mother - who arrives in this idyllic bubble with her teenaged daughter Pearl, and rents a house from the Richardsons. But Mia carries with her a mysterious past and a disregard for the status quo that threatens to upend this carefully ordered community. *Little Fires Everywhere* explores the weight of secrets, the nature of art and identity, and the ferocious pull of motherhood - and the danger of believing that following the rules can avert disaster. Now a TV series on Hulu.

***There There* by Tommy Orange**

"Not since Sherman Alexie's *The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven* and Louise Erdrich's *Love Medicine* has such a powerful and urgent Native American voice exploded onto the landscape of contemporary fiction. Fierce, angry, funny, groundbreaking--Tommy Orange's first novel is a wondrous and shattering portrait of an America few of us have ever seen. *There There* is a multi-generational, relentlessly paced story about violence and recovery, hope and loss, identity and power, dislocation and communion, and the beauty and despair woven into the history of a nation and its people. A glorious, unforgettable debut.

***Where the Crawdads Sing* by Delia Owens**

For years, rumors of the "Marsh Girl" haunted Barkley Cove, a quiet fishing village. Kya Clark is barefoot and wild; unfit for polite society. So in late 1969, when the popular Chase Andrews is found dead, locals immediately suspect her. But Kya is not what they say. A born naturalist with just one day of school, she takes life's lessons from the land, learning the real ways of the world from the dishonest signals of fireflies. But while she has the skills to live in solitude forever, the time comes when she yearns to be touched and loved. Drawn to two young men from town, who are each intrigued by her wild beauty, Kya opens herself to a new and startling world—until the unthinkable happens.

***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.

***Commonwealth* by Ann Patchett**

Commonwealth is the story of two broken families and the paths their lives take over the course of 40 years, through love and marriage, death and divorce, and a dark secret from childhood that lies underneath it all.

***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.

***Small Great Things* by Jodi Picoult**

One day during a shift, delivery nurse Ruth Jefferson begins a routine checkup on a newborn only to be told a few minutes later that she's been reassigned. The parents are white supremacists and don't want Ruth, who is African American, to touch their child. The hospital complies with their request, but the next day, the baby goes into cardiac distress while Ruth is alone in the nursery. Does she obey orders or does she intervene? Ruth hesitates before performing CPR and, as a result, is charged with a serious crime. Kennedy McQuarrie, a white public defender, takes her case but gives unexpected advice: Kennedy insists that mentioning race in the courtroom is not a winning strategy. Conflicted by Kennedy's counsel, Ruth tries to keep life as normal as possible for her family as the case becomes a media sensation.

***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. Now a Netflix film!

***The Rosie Project* by Graeme Simsion**

Genetics professor Don Tillman's ordered, predictable life is thrown into chaos when love enters the equation. Never good with social cues, Don explains his difficulty empathizing with others as a defining symptom of the autism spectrum, as a result of his brain simply being wired differently. 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. 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. 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. 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.

***A Gentleman in Moscow* by Amor Towles**

A Gentleman in Moscow immerses us in another elegantly drawn era with the story of Count Alexander Rostov. When, in 1922, he is deemed an unrepentant aristocrat by a Bolshevik tribunal, the count is sentenced to house arrest in the Metropol, a grand hotel across the street from the Kremlin. Rostov, an indomitable man of erudition and wit, has never worked a day in his life, and must now live in an attic room while some of the most tumultuous decades in Russian history are unfolding outside the hotel's doors. Unexpectedly, his reduced circumstances provide him a doorway into a much larger world of emotional discovery. Brimming with humor, a glittering cast of characters, and one beautifully rendered scene after another, this singular novel casts a spell as it relates the count's endeavor to gain a deeper understanding of what it means to be a man of purpose.

***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.

***Underground Railroad* by Colson Whitehead**

Pulitzer Prize Winner. Cora is a slave on a cotton plantation in Georgia. When Caesar, a recent arrival from Virginia, tells her about the Underground Railroad, they decide to take a terrifying risk and escape. In Whitehead's ingenious conception, the Underground Railroad is no mere metaphor--engineers and conductors operate a secret network of tracks and tunnels beneath the Southern soil. Cora and Caesar's first stop is South Carolina, in a city that initially seems like a haven. But the city's placid surface masks an insidious scheme designed for its black denizens. And even worse: Ridgeway, the relentless slave catcher, is close on their heels.

***Before We Were Yours* by Lisa Wingate**

Based on one of America's most notorious real-life scandals in which the director of a Memphis adoption organization kidnapped and sold poor children to wealthy families all over the country, Wingate's wrenching and ultimately uplifting tale reminds us how, even though our paths can lead to many places, the heart never forgets where we belong.

***Underground Airlines* by Ben Winters**

It is the present-day, and the world is as we know it: smartphones, social networking and Happy Meals. Save for one thing: the Civil War never occurred. A gifted young black man calling himself Victor has struck a bargain with federal law enforcement, working as a bounty hunter for the US Marshall Service. He's got plenty of work. In this version of America, slavery continues in four states called "the Hard Four." On the trail of a runaway known as Jackdaw, Victor arrives in Indianapolis knowing that something isn't right--with the case file, with his work, and with the country itself. A mystery to himself, Victor suppresses his memories of his childhood on a plantation, and works to infiltrate the local cell of an abolitionist movement called the Underground Airlines. Victor believes himself to be a good man doing bad work, unwilling to give up the freedom he has worked so hard to earn. But in pursuing Jackdaw, Victor discovers secrets at the core of the country's arrangement with the Hard Four, secrets the government will preserve at any cost.

***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. 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.

***Hillbilly Elegy* by J.D. Vance (307.72 Vance)**

From a former marine and Yale Law School graduate, a powerful account of growing up in a poor Rust Belt town that offers a broader, probing look at the struggles of America's white working class.

***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.

***Poisoned City* by Anna Clark (363.6 Clark)**

When the people of Flint, Michigan, turned on their faucets in April 2014, the water pouring out was poisoned with lead and other toxins. Through a series of disastrous decisions, the state government had switched the city's water to a source that corroded Flint's aging lead pipes. Complaints about the foul-smelling water were dismissed: the residents of Flint—a largely poor African American city of about 100,000 people—were not seen as credible, even in matters of their own lives. It took 18 months of activism and a band of dogged outsiders to force the state to admit that the water was poisonous. But this was only after 12 people died and Flint's children suffered irreparable harm. The long battle for accountability and a humane response to this man-made disaster have only just begun. In the first full-length account of this epic failure, The

Poisoned City recounts the gripping story of Flint's poisoned water through the people who caused it, suffered from it, and exposed it. It is a chronicle of one town, but could also be about any American city, all made precarious by the neglect of infrastructure through democratic decision-making. Cities like Flint are set up to fail—and for the people who live and work in them, the consequences may be mortal.

***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.

***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.

***Montana, 1948* by Larry Watson (813.54 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.

***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.

***Unbroken* by Laura Hillenbrand (940.54 Hillenbrand)**

In 1943 a bomber crashes into the Pacific Ocean. Against all odds, one young lieutenant survives. Louis Zamperini had already transformed himself from child delinquent to prodigious athlete, running in the Berlin Olympics. Now he must embark on one of the Second World War's most extraordinary odysseys. Zamperini faces thousands of miles of open ocean on a failing raft. Beyond lie only greater trials, in Japan's prisoner-of-war camps. Driven to the limits of endurance, Zamperini's destiny, whether triumph or tragedy, depends on the strength of his will...

***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.

***Killers of the Flower Moon* by David Grann (976.6 Grann)**

In the 1920s, members of Oklahoma's Osage Indian nation were the world's richest people per capita, for oil had been discovered beneath their land. Then they began dying mysteriously in what proved to be a test for the newly formed FBI. A story both chilling and shameful; from author of the No. 1 New York Times best-selling *The Lost City of Z*, this is the true-life murder mystery about one of the most monstrous crimes in American history.

Biographies

Arranged by Last Name

***Waking Up White: And Finding Myself in the Story of Race* by Debby Irving**

For twenty-five years, Debby Irving sensed inexplicable racial tensions in her personal and professional relationships. As a colleague and neighbor, she worried about offending people she dearly wanted to befriend. As an arts administrator, she didn't understand why her diversity efforts lacked traction. As a teacher, she found her best efforts to reach out to students and families of color left her wondering what she was missing. Then, in 2009, one "aha!" moment launched an adventure of discovery and insight that drastically shifted her worldview and upended her life plan. In *Waking Up White*, Irving tells her often cringe-worthy story with such openness that readers will turn every page rooting for her—and ultimately for all of us.

***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.

***Becoming* by Michelle Obama**

In a life filled with meaning and accomplishment, Michelle Obama has emerged as one of the most iconic and compelling women of our era. As First Lady of the United States of America--the first African American to serve in that role--she helped create the most welcoming and inclusive White House in history, while also establishing herself as a powerful advocate for women and girls in the U.S. and around the world, dramatically changing the ways that families pursue healthier and more active lives, and standing with her husband as he led America through some of its most harrowing moments. In her memoir, a work of deep reflection and mesmerizing storytelling, Michelle Obama invites readers into her world, chronicling the experiences that have shaped her. With unerring honesty and lively wit, she describes her triumphs and her disappointments, both public and private, telling her full story as she has lived it--in her own words and on her own terms. Warm, wise, and revelatory, *Becoming* is the deeply personal reckoning of a woman of soul and substance who has steadily defied expectations--and whose story inspires us to do the same.

***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.

***Educated* by Tara Westover**

Tara Westover was seventeen the first time she set foot in a classroom. Born to Mormon survivalists in the mountains of Idaho, she prepared for the end of the world by stockpiling home-canned peaches and sleeping with her "head-for-the-hills" bag. Her father distrusted the medical establishment, so Tara never saw a doctor or nurse. When another brother got himself into college and came back with news of the world beyond the mountain, Tara decided to try a new kind of life. She taught herself enough mathematics, grammar, and science to take the ACT and was admitted to Brigham Young University. Her quest for knowledge transformed her, taking her over oceans and into a future she never could have imagined, but eventually leading her back to her home on the mountain, where she confronted her family and her past.