

Avon Lake Public Library

Book Discussion Collection

Your book discussion group may checkout multiple copies from our collection of fiction and non-fiction titles.

All titles circulate for six (6) weeks. Mention to the staff at the Circulation desk that the books are for a group discussion.

All Quiet on the Western Front

Remarque, Erich Maria

The intellectual, spiritual, and physical demise of six German soldiers is chronicled in a legendary World War narrative.

Fiction

Atonement: a Novel

McEwan, Ian

In this rich novel, a young girl unwittingly tells a tale that turns her family upside down. It is brilliant and utterly enthralling in its depiction of childhood, love and war, England and class. The exploration of shame and forgiveness, of atonement and the difficulty of absolution are unveiled.

Fiction

Balzac and the Little Chinese Seamstress

Dai, Sijie

During the Chinese Cultural Revolution, two boys are sent to the country for reeducation. Their lives take an unexpected turn when they meet the beautiful daughter of a local tailor and stumble upon a forbidden stash of Western literature.

Fiction

Below Stairs

Powell, Margaret

A true story of a kitchen-maid's through-the-key hole memoir of life in the great houses of England. At fifteen, she arrived at the servants' entrance to begin her life as a kitchen maid in 1920s England.

Biography

The Book Thief

Zusak, Markus

Set during World War II in Germany, this groundbreaking new novel is the story of Liesel Meminger, a foster girl living outside of Munich. Liesel scratches out a meager existence for herself by stealing something she cannot resist: books. With the help of her accordion-playing foster father, she learns to read and shares her stolen books.

Fiction

Bookseller of Kabul

Seierstad, Asne

Readers get a first-hand look at Afghani life as few outsiders have seen it. Invited to live with Sultan Khan, a bookseller in Kabul, and his family for months, this account of her experience allows the Khans to speak for themselves, giving us a genuinely gripping and moving portrait of a family, and of a country of great cultural riches and extreme contradictions.

Nonfiction

Cutting for Stone

Verghese, Andrew

In this enthralling family saga of Africa and America, Marion and Shiva Stone are twin brothers born of a secret union between a beautiful Indian nun and a brash British surgeon at a mission hospital in Addis Ababa. Politics, revolution, medicine and love entwine throughout the saga.

Fiction

Defending Jacob

Landay, William

Andy Barber has been an ADA in his suburban Massachusetts County for more than 20 years. But after a shocking crime shatters their New England town, Andy is blindsided by what happens next: His 14-year-old son is charged with the murder of a fellow student.

Fiction

Destiny of the Republic

Millard, Candice

Significant scholarly attention has long eluded the story of James A. Garfield; however, with this book, former National Geographic writer Millard sheds light on one of history's forgotten presidents. Garfield was assassinated just four months into his presidency.

Nonfiction

Doc

Russell, Mary Doria

Born to the life of an educated Southern gentleman, Dr. John Henry Holliday is given a choice at the age of twenty-two: die within months in Atlanta or leave everyone he loves in hopes of finding health in the West. Young, scared, lonely and sick, he arrives on the rawest edge of the Texas frontier in time for an economic crash. Soon he's gambling professionally and living with a high-strung, classically educated Hungarian prostitute who insists that they follow the money to Dodge City. And that is where the unlikely friendship of Doc Holliday and a lawman named Wyatt Earp begins-- before the gunfight at the O.K. Corral links their names forever in American frontier mythology --when neither man wanted fame or deserved notoriety.

Fiction

Don't Let's Go to the Dogs Tonight

Fuller, Alexandra

A descriptive biography of her childhood in Africa during the Rhodesian civil war of 1971 to 1979, the author writes about her life on farms in southern Rhodesia, Milawi, and Zambia with an alcoholic mother and a frequently absent father.

Biography

The Elegant Gathering of White Snows

Radish, Kris

A group of eight women, who normally meet every Thursday night to share their lives, suddenly decide to embark on a pilgrimage across the nation, inspiring other women with their stories of friendship, love, loss, and freedom.

Fiction

The End of Your Life Book Club

Schwalbe, Will

Sharing books he loved with his savvy New Yorker mom had always been a great pleasure for both mother and son, becoming especially poignant when she was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer in 2007, at age 73. Could a book club be run by only two people?

Biography

Fault in Our Stars

Green, John

Sixteen-year-old Hazel, a stage IV thyroid cancer patient, has accepted her terminal diagnosis until a chance meeting with a boy at cancer support group forces her to reexamine her perspective on love, loss, and life.

Fiction

Finders Keepers

Bowden, Mark

Joey Coyle, a down-and-out longshoreman from working-class South Philadelphia, finds two curious yellow containers containing \$1.2 million in unmarked money from a casino. It is the remarkable tale of an ordinary man faced with an extraordinary moral dilemma.

Biography

The Grace That Keeps This World

Bailey, Tom

On the edge of the Adirondack wilderness, survival is a way of life for the Hazen family. On the first day of hunting season Gary Hazen and his two sons enter the woods, unaware that the trip they are embarking on will force them to come to terms with their differences.

Fiction

Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Society

Shaffer, Mary Ann

The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society is a unique book club formed in a unique, spur-of-the-moment way: as an alibi to protect its members from arrest by the Germans. Juliet begins a remarkable correspondence with the Society. Captivated by their stories, she sets sail for Guernsey, and what she finds there will change her forever.

Fiction

The History of Love

Krauss, Nicole

Leo Gursky taps his radiator each evening to let his upstairs neighbor know he's still alive. But it wasn't always like this: in the Polish village of his youth, he fell in love and wrote a book. . . . Sixty years later and half a world away, fourteen-year-old Alma undertakes an adventure to find her namesake and save her family.

Fiction

Hotel on the Corner of Bitter and Sweet

Ford, Jamie

Chinese American Henry and Japanese American Keiko bond as the only Asian students in a Seattle elementary school in 1942. The two are the victims of both racist attitudes and the patriotic fervor following Pearl Harbor. It is an old-fashioned historical novel that alternates between the early 1940s and 1984.

Fiction

How the Garcia Girls Lost Their Accents

Alvarez, Julia

The four Garcia girls escape the Dominican Republic and a life of privilege. In the 1960s, they come to the United States and face a difficult adjustment. The novel spans more than thirty years in the lives of four sisters.

Fiction

Husband's Secret

Moriarty, Liane

Discovering a tattered letter that says she is to open it only in the event of her husband's death, Cecelia, a successful family woman, is unable to resist reading the letter and discovers a secret that shatters her life and the lives of two other women.

Fiction

In the Garden of Beasts

Larson, Eric

The experiences of U.S. ambassador to Germany William E. Dodd and his family in Berlin in the early years of Hitler's rule are chronicled. The result is a dazzling, addictively readable work that speaks volumes about why the world did not recognize the grave threat posed by Hitler.

Nonfiction

In the Lake of the Woods

O'Brien, Tim

This riveting novel of love examines the lasting impact of the 20th century's legacy of violence and warfare, both at home and abroad. When long-hidden secrets about the atrocities he committed in Vietnam come to light, a candidate for the U.S. Senate retreats with his wife to a lakeside cabin in northern Minnesota.

Fiction

Invention of Wings

Kidd, Sue Monk

The story follows Hetty "Handful" Grimke, a Charleston slave, and Sarah, the daughter of the wealthy Grimke family. The novel begins on Sarah's eleventh birthday, when she is given ownership over Handful, who is to be her handmaid, and follows the next thirty-five years of their lives. Inspired in part by the historical figure of Sarah Grimke (a feminist, suffragist and, importantly, an abolitionist), the author allows herself to go beyond the record to flesh out the inner lives of all the characters, both real and imagined.

Fiction

The Kitchen House

Grissom, Kathleen

Lavinia is a seven year old Irish indentured servant on a Virginia tobacco plantation. She straddles two different worlds as her loyalties are called into question as she rises to mistress of the big house.

Fiction

The Last Town on Earth

Mullen, Thomas

It is the autumn of 1918, a world war and an influenza epidemic rage outside the isolated utopian logging community of Commonwealth, Wash. It's a sobering look at a nation involved with a human enemy far away, a disease at home, fear, and political and cultural forces.

Fiction

The Light between the Oceans

Stedman, M.L.

In 1918, Tom Sherbourne returns to his home in Australia after serving four years in the Great War. He applies for a job as a lighthouse keeper and is assigned to the light on Janus Rock, a remote island off the southwest coast where he hopes to erase his horrific memories of war. Several years later, Tom brings to the island his bride, Isabel, who is determined to adapt to Tom's solitary life.

Fiction

A Long Way Gone: Memoirs of a Boy Soldier

Beah, Ishmael

In the more than fifty conflicts going on worldwide, it is estimated that there are some 300,000 child soldiers. Ishmael Beah used to be one of them. What is war like through the eyes of a child soldier? How does one become a killer? How does one stop?

Nonfiction

Loving Frank

Horan, Nancy

"I have been standing on the side of life, watching it float by. I want to swim in the river. I want to feel the current." "So writes Mamah Borthwick Cheney in her diary as she struggles to justify her clandestine love affair with Frank Lloyd Wright.

Fiction

Major Pettigrew's Last Stand

Simonson, Helen

Sixty-eight-year-old Maj. Ernest Pettigrew has settled into a genteel life of quiet retirement in his beloved village of Edgcombe St. Mary. He is gently smitten by the widowed Mrs. Ali, the lovely Pakistani owner of the local shop. The Major finds his careful efforts to court Mrs. Ali constantly nudged off by the villager's not-so-subtle racist attitudes.

Fiction

Me Before You

Moyes, Jojo

Louisa Clark is an ordinary girl living an exceedingly ordinary life -- steady boyfriend, close family -- who has never been farther afield than their tiny village. She takes a badly needed job working for Will Traynor, who is wheelchair-bound after a motorcycle accident. Will has always lived a huge life -- big deals, extreme sports, world travel -- and he's pretty sure he cannot live this way. Will is acerbic, moody, and bossy -- but Lou refuses to treat him with kid gloves, and soon his happiness means more to her than she expected. When she learns that Will has shocking plans of his own, she sets out to show him that life is still worth living.

Fiction

The Memory Keeper's Daughter

Edwards, Kim

In a tale spanning twenty-five years, a doctor delivers his newborn twins during a snowstorm and, rashly deciding to protect his wife from their baby daughter's affliction with Down Syndrome, turns her over to a nurse, who secretly raises the child.

Fiction

Never Let Me Go

Ishiguro, Kazuo

An unforgettable edge of your seat mystery that is at once heartbreakingly tender and morally courageous about what it means to be human. Explore the strange destiny of the world of Hailsham, a British Boarding School for special students.

Fiction

Night Circus

Morgenstern, Erin

To enter the black-and-white-striped tents of Le Cirque des Reves is to enter a world where objects really do turn into birds and people really do disappear. Even though visitors believe the performances are all illusion, they are obsessively drawn to this extraordinary night circus.

Fiction

October Sky

Hickam, Homer

It was 1957, the year Sputnik raced across the Appalachian sky, and the small town of Coalwood, West Virginia, was slowly dying. Homer fell in with a group of misfits who learned not only how to turn scraps of metal into sophisticated rockets but how to sustain their hope in a town that swallowed its men alive.

Biography

One Last Dance

Williams, Mardo

This is a story about finding love at any age. It's the delightful tale of Morgan, aged 89, and Dixie, 79, two mature individuals on seemingly divergent paths. But the business only relationship changes and strengthens as the couple unites to combat illness, scandal, and a near-fatal accident.

Fiction

One Summer: America 1927

Bryson, Bill

A sprawling account of a brief period in a singular year: 1927. Accounts include Charles Lindbergh's solo flight over the Atlantic, Sacco and Vanzetti's execution, Gutzon Borglum's start on the sculpting of Mt. Rushmore, the Dempsey-Carpentier fight, and Babe Ruth's 60 home runs.

Nonfiction

An Open Book: Coming of Age in the Heartland

Dirda, Michael

How can comics and adventure stories, poetry and Proust change your life? In its pages literary journalist Michael Dirda recalls not only his colorful family, friends, and teachers but also, and just as importantly, the fictional characters and assorted books that fueled his imagination.

Biography

Reading Lolita in Tehran

Nafisi, Azar

Every Thursday morning for two years in the Islamic Republic of Iran, a bold and inspired teacher named Azar Nafisi secretly gathered seven of her most committed female students to read forbidden Western classics. Islamic morality squads staged arbitrary raids in Tehran, fundamentalists seized hold of the universities, and a blind censor stifled artistic expression.

Biography

Room: a novel

Donoghue, Emma

As narrator, five year old Jack lives as a captive with his mother in an 11 foot square soundproofed cell in their kidnapper's backyard. Outside is real and they must escape.

*Fiction***Round House**

Erdrich, Louise

Set on an Ojibwe reservation in North Dakota in 1988, Erdrich focuses on 13-year-old Joseph. After his mother is brutally raped she refuses to speak about the experience. Joe must not only cope with her slow physical and mental recovery but also confront his own feelings of anger and helplessness.

*Fiction***Sarah's Key**

de Rosnay, Tatiana

Paris July 1942: Sarah, a ten year old girl is taken with her parents by the French police as they go door to door arresting Jewish families. Sixty years later: Sarah's story intertwines with that of Julia Jarmond, an American journalist investigating the roundup.

*Fiction***The Shoemaker's Wife**

Trigiani, Adriana

Italian teenagers Ciro Lazzari and Enza Ravanelli feel an instant romantic connection when they first meet in the Alps in 1908, but their budding relationship is interrupted when Ciro must quickly leave Italy after learning a local priest's shameful secret. The two meet again years later in New York City, where Ciro works as an apprentice to a shoemaker and Enza enjoys the elegant life of a seamstress at the opulent Metropolitan Opera

*Fiction***Someone**

McDermott, Alice

A fully realized portrait of one woman's life; in all its complexity. An ordinary life--its sharp pains and unexpected joys, its bursts of clarity and moments of confusion--lived by an ordinary woman from childhood to old age.

*Fiction***The Soul of a Chef**

Ruhlman, Michael

As an in-depth foray into the world of professional cooking, Ruhlman enters the lives and kitchens of rising star Michael Symon of Lola and Thomas Keller of the French Laundry. Any reader's hunger for the knowledge about cooking and food, and the secrets of successful chefs will be satisfied.

*Nonfiction***South of Broad**

Conroy, Pat

The ties among a cast of saints and sinners endure for years, surviving marriages happy and troubled, unrequited loves and unspoken longings, hard-won successes and devastating breakdowns, and Charleston's dark legacy of racism and class divisions.

Fiction

Still Alice

Genova, Lisa

Feeling at the top of her game when she is suddenly diagnosed with early onset Alzheimer's disease, Harvard psychologist Alice Howland struggles to find meaning and purpose in her life as her concept of self slips away. *Fiction*

Storied Life of A.J. Fikry

Zevin, Gabrielle

When his most prized possession, a rare collection of Poe poems, is stolen, bookstore owner A. J. Fikry begins isolating himself from his friends, family and associates before receiving a mysterious package that compels him to remake his life. The irascible A. J. Fikry, owner of Island Books, the only bookstore on Alice Island, has already lost his wife. Now, a rare book has been stolen from right under his nose in the most embarrassing of circumstances. The store itself, it seems, will be next to go. One night upon closing, he discovers a toddler in his children's section with a note from her mother pinned to her Elmo doll: "I want Maya to grow up in a place with books and among people who care about such kinds of things. I love her very much, but I can no longer take care of her." A search for Maya's mother and A.J.'s A. J.'s rare book ensues. *Fiction*

Tiger's Wife

Obrecht, Tea

A narrative account of the love, loss and war in the conflict ridden Balkans. Natalie is a young doctor searching for the circumstances surrounding the death of her grandfather. Secrets abound. *Fiction*

Trust Your Eyes

Barclay, Linwood

A schizophrenic, map-obsessed, shut-in who tours the world using a computer program witnesses what he believes to be a murder in downtown New York City and enlists his caretaker brother in an effort to investigate. *Fiction*

Under a Wide and Starry Sky

Horan, Nancy

Chronicles the unconventional love affair of Scottish literary giant Robert Louis Stevenson, author of classics including Treasure Island and The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, and American divorcee Fanny Van de Grift Osbourne. *Fiction*

The Unforgiving Minute

Mullaney, Craig

The Afghanistan War can teach many hard lessons to a West Point grad who is a Rhodes Scholar and an Army Ranger. Honest and unforgettable is this portrait of a young soldier. *Nonfiction*

War That Forged a Nation: Why the Civil War Still Matters *McPherson*

Pulitzer-Prize winning historian James McPherson considers why the Civil War remains so firmly embedded within our national consciousness. The drama and the tragedy of the war, from its scope and size (an estimated death toll of 750, 000, not including civilians) to the nearly mythical characters involved-Abraham Lincoln, Robert E. Lee, and Stonewall Jackson-help to explain why the war commands our attention. Further, McPherson believes that to understand the issues of today, we need look no further than the Civil War

Nonfiction

What Alice Forgot

Moriarty, Liane

Alice Love is twenty-nine, crazy about her husband, and pregnant with her first child. So imagine her surprise when she comes to on the floor of a gym and is whisked off to the hospital to find out that she's getting divorced, has three kids, and is actually thirty-nine. Now Alice must reconstruct a lost decade -- and try to reconstruct her life. Ultimately, she must discover if forgetting is a blessing or a curse, and if it's possible to start over . . .

Fiction

Where'd You Go Bernadette

Semple, Maria

This modern-day comic caper is full of heart and ingenuity. Eighth-grader Bee is the daughter of Microsoft genius Elgin Branch and Bernadette Fox, a once-famous architect who has become a recluse in her Seattle home. Bee has a simple request: a family cruise to Antarctica as a reward for her good grades. Her parents acquiesce, but not without trepidation.

Fiction

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