



## Book Discussion Collection

Updated 04.10.19

*Your book discussion group may check out multiple copies from our collection of fiction and non-fiction titles.  
All circulate for six (6) weeks.*

*They are filed alphabetically by title under the alcove windows north of our Mystery Fiction collection.*

### [After Anna](#)

**Scottoline, Lisa**

Noah Alderman has remarried a wonderful woman, Maggie, and for the first time in a long time he and his son are happy. But their lives are turned upside down when Maggie's daughter Anna moves in with them. Events take a deadly turn when Anna is murdered. *Fiction*

### [All the Light We Cannot See](#)

**Doerr, Anthony**

A novel 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. *Fiction*

### [An American Marriage](#)

**Jones, Tayari**

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. *Fiction*

### [And Then There Were None](#)

**Christie, Agatha**

Ten people, strangers to each other, are invited to a lavish estate on an island. The tension mounts as, one by one, they are murdered. *Fiction*

### [Beach House for Rent](#)

**Monroe, Mary Alice**

When Cara Rutledge rents out her quaint beach house on Isle of Palms to Heather Wyatt for the entire summer, it's a win-win by any standard. Cara generates income necessary to keep husband Brett's ecotourism boat business afloat, and prone Heather, a young artist who's been given a commission to paint shorebirds for postage stamps, has a quiet space in which to work and tend to her pet canaries uninterrupted. It isn't long, however, before both women's idyllic summers are irrevocably altered. *Fiction*

### [Before the Fall](#)

**Hawley, Noah**

On a foggy summer night, eleven privileged people depart Martha's Vineyard on a private jet headed for New York. Sixteen minutes later, the unthinkable happens: the plane plunges into the ocean. With chapters weaving between the aftermath of the crash and the backstories of the passengers, the mystery surrounding the tragedy heightens. *Fiction*

### [Brooklyn](#)

**Tóibín, Colm**

In Ireland in the early 1950's, Eilis Lacey is one of many who cannot find work at home. Thus when a job is offered in America, it is clear to everyone that she must go. Leaving behind her family and country, Eilis heads for Brooklyn, New York. *Fiction*

### [The Burgess Boys](#)

**Strout, Elizabeth**

Haunted by the freak accident that killed their father when they were children, Jim and Bob Burgess escaped from their Maine hometown of Shirley Falls for New York City as soon as they possibly could. Jim, a sleek, successful corporate lawyer, has belittled his bighearted

brother their whole lives, and Bob, a Legal Aid attorney who idolizes Jim, has always taken it in stride. But their long-standing dynamic is upended when their sister, Susan -- the Burgess sibling who stayed behind -- urgently calls them home. Her lonely teenage son, Zach, has gotten himself into a world of trouble, and Susan desperately needs their help. *Fiction*

### [Camino Island](#)

**Grisham, John**

A gang of thieves stages a daring heist from a secure vault deep below Princeton University. Their loot is priceless, but Princeton has insured it for \$25million. Bruce Cable owns a popular bookstore in the sleepy resort town of Santa Rosa on Camino Island in Florida. He makes his real money, though, as a prominent dealer in rare books. Very few people know that he occasionally dabbles in the black market of stolen books and manuscripts. *Fiction*

### [Charms for the Easy Life](#)

**Gibbons, Kaye**

Sophia, Margaret, and Charlie Kate find strength in a time when women almost always depended on men, and their bond deepens as each one experiences love and loss during World War II. *Fiction*

### [Code Girls](#)

**Mundy, Liza**

Recruited by the U. S. Army and Navy from small towns and elite colleges, more than ten thousand women served as codebreakers during World War II. While their brothers and boyfriends took up arms, these women moved to Washington and learned the meticulous work of code-breaking. *Nonfiction*

### [Commonwealth](#)

**Patchett, Ann**

Tells the enthralling story of how an unexpected romantic encounter irrevocably changes two families' lives. One Sunday afternoon in Southern California, Bert Cousins shows up at Franny Keating's christening party uninvited. Before evening falls, he has kissed Franny's mother, Beverly--thus setting in motion the dissolution of their marriages and the joining of two families. Spanning five decades, *Commonwealth* explores how this chance encounter reverberates through the lives of the four parents and six children involved. *Fiction*

### [The Curious Charms of Arthur Pepper](#)

**Patrick, Phaedra**

Arthur Pepper stopped engaging with life a year ago, when his wife of 40 years died. But the discovery among her things of a charm bracelet he'd never seen before prompts a quest to discover the origins of the bracelet and all of its charms. *Fiction*

### [The Death of Mrs. Westaway](#)

**Ware, Ruth**

On a day that begins like any other, Hal receives a mysterious letter bequeathing her a substantial inheritance. She realizes very quickly that the letter was sent to the wrong person--but also that the cold-reading skills she's honed as a tarot card reader might help her claim the money. Soon, Hal finds herself at the funeral of the deceased...where it dawns on her that there is something very, very wrong about this strange situation and the inheritance at the center of it. *Fiction*

### [Delicious!](#)

**Reichl, Ruth**

Working as a public relations hotline consultant for a once-prestigious culinary magazine, Billie Breslin unexpectedly enters a world of New York restaurateurs and artisanal purveyors while reading World War II letters exchanged between a plucky 12-year-old and James Beard. *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*

### [Eleanor Oliphant is Completely Fine](#)

**Honeyman, Gail**

A socially awkward, routine-oriented loner teams up with a bumbling IT guy from her office to assist an elderly accident victim, forging a friendship that saves all three from lives of isolation and secret unhappiness. *Fiction*

### [Educated: A Memoir](#)

**Westover, Tara**

Tara Westover was seventeen the first time she set foot in a classroom. Born to survivalists in the mountains of Idaho, she prepared for the end of the world by sleeping with her "head-for-the-hills bag." 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 to Harvard and to Cambridge University. Only then would she wonder if she'd traveled too far, if there was still a way home. *Nonfiction*

### [A Fall of Marigolds](#)

**Meissner, Susan**

On Ellis Island in New York Harbor, nurse Clara Wood cannot face returning to Manhattan, where the man she loved fell to his death in the Triangle Shirtwaist Fire. Then, while caring for a fevered immigrant whose own loss mirrors hers, she becomes intrigued by a name embroidered onto the scarf he carries. September 2011: Manhattan's Upper West Side. Widow Taryn Michaels has convinced herself that she is living fully, working in a charming specialty fabric store and raising her daughter alone. Then a long-lost photograph appears in a national magazine, and she is forced to relive the terrible day her husband died in the collapse of the World Trade Towers ... the same day a stranger reached out and saved her. Will a chance reconnection and a century-old scarf open Taryn's eyes to the larger forces at work in her life? *Fiction*

### [Flight Behavior](#)

**Kingsolver, Barbara**

Kingsolver's riveting story concerns a young wife and mother on a failing farm in rural Tennessee who experiences something she cannot explain, and how her discovery energizes various competing factions--religious leaders, climate scientists, environmentalists, politicians -- trapping her in the center of the conflict. *Fiction*

### [A Gentleman in Moscow](#)

**Towles, Amor**

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. *Fiction*

### [A Girl Named Zippy](#)

**Kimmel, Haven**

In this memoir, the author takes readers back to a time when small-town America was caught in the amber of the innocent post-war period--people helped their neighbors, went to church on Sunday, and kept barnyard animals in their backyards. *Nonfiction*

### [Go Set a Watchman](#)

**Lee, Harper**

Twenty years after the trial of Tom Robinson, Scout returns home to Maycomb to visit her father and struggles with personal and political issues as her small Alabama town adjusts to the turbulent events beginning to transform the United States in the mid-1950s. *Fiction*

### [Hidden America](#)

**Laskas, Jeanne Marie**

This book looks at the remarkable men and women whose low-profile accomplishments contribute to the running of the United States, from coal miners and oil rig workers to migrant laborers and air traffic controllers. The author spent weeks in an Ohio coal mine and on an Alaskan oil rig; in a Maine migrant labor camp, a Texas beef ranch, the air traffic control tower at New York's LaGuardia Airport, a California landfill, an Arizona gun shop, the cab of a long haul truck in Iowa, and the stadium of the Cincinnati Bengals cheerleaders. *Nonfiction*

### [Hillbilly Elegy: A Memoir of a Family and Culture in Crisis](#)

**Vance, J.D.**

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. *Nonfiction*

### [House Rules](#)

**Picoult, Jodi**

A teenager with Asperger's syndrome -- smart, quirky, with a passion for crime-scene analysis -- winds up on trial for murder. *Fiction*

### [The Hundred-Foot Journey](#)

### **Morais, Richard**

Born above his grandfather's modest restaurant in Mumbai, Hassan Haji first experienced life through intoxicating whiffs of spicy fish curry, trips to local markets, and gourmet outings with his mother. When tragedy pushes the family out of India, they eat their way around the world before settling in a small village in the French Alps. There they open an Indian restaurant. *Fiction*

### **The 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*

### **The 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 Keeper of Lost Things**

#### **Hoban, Ruth**

Hogan's whimsical first novel weaves together the stories of two British assistants, one of whom works for a publisher in the 1970s and the other who, in the present day, works for an unusual elderly gentleman who has dedicated himself to assembling a room full of 40 years' worth of detritus lost or abandoned by its owners. *Fiction*

### **The Language of Flowers**

#### **Diffenbaugh, Vanessa**

The story of a woman whose gift for flowers helps her change the lives of others even as she struggles to overcome her own past. *Fiction*

### **Little Fires Everywhere**

#### **Ng, Celeste**

Ugliness seethes under a placid suburban surface in this multilayered novel, in which two families grow too close for comfort. Itinerant artist Mia and her teenage daughter Pearl rent a Shaker Heights, Ohio, house from the Richardsons, who have four kids around Pearl's age. Three of the four become Pearl's constant companions; the fourth becomes Mia's. A custody suit elsewhere in the community threatens everything. *Fiction*

### **The Little Paris Bookshop**

#### **George, Nina**

Monsieur Perdu calls himself a literary apothecary. From his floating bookstore in a barge on the Seine, he prescribes novels for the hardships of life. Using his intuitive feel for the exact book a reader needs, Perdu mends broken hearts and souls. The only person he can't seem to heal through literature is himself; he's still haunted by heartbreak after his great love disappeared. She left him with only a letter, which he has never opened. After Perdu is finally tempted to read the letter, he hauls anchor and departs on a mission to the south of France, hoping to make peace with his loss and discover the end of the story. *Fiction*

### **Love, Anthony**

#### **Genova, Lisa**

Two women meet by accident on a Nantucket beach and are drawn into a friendship. Olivia is a young mother whose 8-year-old severely autistic son has recently died. She comes to the island in a trial separation to try and make sense of the tragedy of her Anthony's short life. Beth, a stay-at-home mother of three, is also recently separated after discovering her husband's long-term infidelity. *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 Edgecombe 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 villagers' not-so-subtle racist attitudes. *Fiction*

### **A Man Called Ove**

#### **Backman, Fredrik**

Meet Ove. He has staunch principles, strict routines, and a short fuse. People call him 'the bitter neighbor from hell'. But behind the cranky exterior there is a story and a sadness. So when one November morning a chatty young couple moves in next door and accidentally flattens Ove's mailbox, it is the lead-in to a comical and heartwarming tale. *Fiction*

### [Manhattan Beach](#)

**Egan, Jennifer**

Anna Kerrigan, nearly 12 years old, accompanies her father to the house of Dexter Styles, a man who, she learns, is crucial to the survival of her father and her family with the Great Depression underway. Years later, her father has disappeared and the country is at war. Anna works at the Brooklyn Naval Yard, where women are allowed to hold jobs that had always belonged to men. She becomes the first female diver, the most dangerous and exclusive of occupations, repairing the ships that will help America win the war. She is the sole provider for her mother and her lovely, severely disabled sister. At a nightclub, she chances to meet Dexter Styles again, and she begins to understand the complexity of her father's life, the reasons he might have vanished. *Fiction*

### [Morningstar: Growing Up with Books](#)

**Hood, Ann**

Morningstar is Hood's account of growing up in a family and a town that did not value books, and learning to love them anyway, finding them a gateway into a big, beautiful world. *Nonfiction*

### [My Name is Lucy Barton](#)

**Strout, Elizabeth**

Lucy Barton is recovering slowly from what should have been a simple operation. Her mother, to whom she hasn't spoken for many years, comes to see her. Gentle gossip about people from Lucy's childhood in Amgash, Illinois, seems to reconnect them, but just below the surface lie the tension and longing that have informed every aspect of Lucy's life: her escape from her troubled family, her desire to become a writer, her marriage, her love for her two daughters. *Fiction*

### [News of the World](#)

**Jiles, Paulette**

In the aftermath of the Civil War, Captain Jefferson Kyle Kidd, an elderly widower and itinerant news reader, is offered fifty dollars to bring an orphan girl, who was kidnapped and raised by Kiowa raiders, from Wichita Falls back to her family in San Antonio. National Book Award finalist. *Fiction*

### [Nine Perfect Strangers](#)

**Moriarty, Liane**

Gathering at a remote health resort for a 10-day fitness program, nine strangers and their enigmatic host become subjects of interest to a brokenhearted novelist who develops uncomfortable doubts about the resort's real agenda. *Fiction*

### [The One-in-a-Million Boy](#)

**Wood, Monica**

After his 11-year-old son dies, guitarist Quinn Parter does yard work for an aged Lithuanian immigrant, Ona Vitkus, whom his son had often visited, and comes to a resolution about his son's death as Ona discusses his son's capacity to listen and learn. *Fiction*

### [The Optimist's Daughter](#)

**Welty, Eudora**

Coming home to Mississippi from Chicago because her father seems to need her, middle-aged, widowed Laurel McKelva Hand is shaken by the self-centeredness of her stepmother, her father's second wife. When her father dies, however, Laurel honestly examines her own heart and reaches a better understanding of herself and her parents as she goes through the old home and as memories are prompted by the undisturbed letters and pictures in her mother's desk. *Fiction*

### [The Paris Wife](#)

**McLain, Paula**

Meeting through mutual friends in Chicago, Hadley is intrigued by brash "beautiful boy" Ernest Hemingway, and after a brief courtship and small wedding, they take off for Paris, where Hadley makes a convincing transformation from an overprotected child to a brave young woman who puts up with impoverished living conditions and shattering loneliness to prop up her husband's career. *Fiction*

### [The Postmistress](#)

**Blake, Sara**

In London covering the Blitz with Edward R. Murrow, Frankie Bard meets a Cape Cod doctor in a shelter and promises that she'll deliver a letter for him when she finally returns to the United States. *Fiction*

## [The Reckoning](#)

**Grisham, John**

Shortly after WWII, a decorated veteran, calmly and with malice aforethought, murders a Methodist preacher. He makes no effort to conceal the crime, and, even after he's arrested and charged with homicide, he refuses to give anyone, even his lawyer, an explanation. *Fiction*

## [The Reivers](#)

**Faulkner, William**

Three unlikely thieves, or reivers, 11-year-old Lucius Priest and two of his family's retainers, set out from Mississippi for Memphis in 1905 in a stolen motorcar. *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*

## [Sing, Unburied, Sing](#)

**Ward, Jesmyn**

Jojo and his toddler sister, Kayla, live with their grandparents, Mam and Pop, and the occasional presence of their drug-addicted mother, Leonie, on a farm on the Gulf Coast of Mississippi. Mam is dying of cancer; and quiet, steady Pop tries to run the household and teach Jojo how to be a man. When the father of Leonie's children is released from prison, she packs her kids and a friend into her car and sets out across the state for the Mississippi State Penitentiary, on a journey rife with danger and promise. National Book Award Winner, 2017. *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*

## [A Spool of Blue Thread](#)

**Tyler, Anne**

The Whitshanks are one of those families that radiate an indefinable kind of specialness, but like all families, their stories reveal only part of the picture: Abby and Red and their four grown children have accumulated not only tender moments, laughter, and celebrations, but also jealousies, disappointments, and carefully guarded secrets. *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*

## [The 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. *Fiction*

## [Sunburn](#)

**Lippman, Laura**

Two lovers are locked in a passionate game of cat and mouse. But instead of rules, this game has dark secrets, forbidden desires, inevitable betrayals, and cold-blooded murder. *Fiction*

## [Tell Tale: Short Stories](#)

**Archer, Jeffrey**

A collection of short tales features a series of protagonists reflecting the author's experiences with the people he has met and the cultures he has visited throughout the past decade. *Fiction*

## [Then She Was Gone](#)

**Jewell, Lisa**

Ten years after her teenage daughter disappears, a woman crosses paths with a charming single father whose young child feels eerily familiar. *Fiction*

## [To Kill a Mockingbird](#)

**Lee, Harper**

When a southern white woman accuses a black man of rape, the outcome of the trial is a foregone conclusion and no lawyer except Atticus Finch will defend him. Finch's defense costs him friendships, but earns him the respect of his two children. Pulitzer Prize for Fiction, 1961. *Fiction*

## [The Unlikely Pilgrimage of Harold Fry](#)

**Joyce, Rachel**

Harold Fry is convinced that he must deliver a letter to an old love in order to save her, meeting various characters along the way and reminiscing about the events of his past and people he has known, as he tries to find peace and acceptance. *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*

## [The Woman in Cabin 10](#)

**Ware, Ruth**

Lo Blacklock, a journalist who writes for a travel magazine, has just been given the assignment of a lifetime: a week on a luxury cruise with only a handful of cabins. The sky is clear, the waters calm, and the veneered, select guests jovial as the exclusive cruise ship, the Aurora, begins her voyage in the picturesque North Sea. But as the week wears on, frigid winds whip the deck, gray skies fall, and Lo witnesses what she can only describe as a dark and terrifying nightmare: a woman being thrown overboard. The problem? All passengers remain accounted for. *Fiction*

## [The Woman in the Window](#)

**Finn, A.J.**

Anna Fox lives alone -- a recluse in her New York City home, unable to venture outside. She spends her days drinking wine and watching old movies, recalling happier times, and spying on her neighbors. Then the Russells move into the house across the street. The perfect family. But when Anna, gazing out her window one night, sees something she shouldn't, her world begins to crumble and its shocking secrets laid bare. *Fiction*

## [Yes, Chef](#)

**Samuelsson, Marcus**

The James Beard Award-winning proprietor of Harlem's *Red Rooster* traces his Ethiopian birth, upbringing by an adoptive family in Sweden, and rise to a famous New York chef, sharing personal insights into his challenges as a black man in a deeply prejudiced industry. *Nonfiction*

## [The Yonahlossee Riding Camp for Girls](#)

**DiSclafani, Anton**

Exiled to an equestrian boarding school in the South at the height of the Great Depression for her role in a family tragedy, strong-willed teen Thea Atwell grapples with painful memories while acclimating to the school's strict environment. *Fiction*