



BOOK CLUB BOOKS

Below are this winter's Book Club selections. Chosen to represent a range of interests, it is hoped these books will stimulate thought and discussion among our diverse group of readers. As always, your comments and suggestions are welcome.

WINTER 2018

Bellevue: Three Centuries of Medicine and Mayhem at America's Most Storied

Hospital by David Oshinsky

The Pulitzer Prize-winning historian delves into the riveting history of New York's iconic public hospital and the tumultuous rise of American medicine from quackery to scientific endeavor. Bellevue occupies a colorful and terrifying place in the public imagination, where vicious psychopaths, derelicts, lunatics, and exotic-disease sufferers were sent. In its two and a half centuries of service, there was hardly an epidemic or social catastrophe—or groundbreaking scientific advance—that did not involve this amazing institution. (nonfiction)

In the Distance by Hernan Diaz

An immigrant story that describes America's manifest destiny in reverse and is also a meditation on the need to connect and survive. A Swedish boy is separated from his older brother and the life he knew when he boards the wrong ship and ends up in San Francisco. He embarks on a dangerous journey eastward to try to find his brother. The characters are as vivid and colorful as the descriptions of the American plains, prairies, and deserts at the time of the Gold Rush. (fiction)

Judas by Amos Oz

An old-fashioned novel of ideas that is strikingly modern, Oz has written an exquisite love story set in mid-twentieth century Jerusalem. Shmuel Ash, lovelorn graduate student and lukewarm socialist, abandons his thesis ("Jewish Views of Jesus") to care for a difficult, elderly Zionist. There he meets a cynical beauty who lost both her father and husband in the wars that defined Israeli statehood. A finalist for the Man Booker Prize and winner of the International Literature Prize. (fiction)

The Lost City of the Monkey God by Douglas Preston

For centuries, rumors have swirled about a lost city of immense wealth hidden in the Honduran interior. Indigenous tribes believe that their ancestors fled there to escape the Spanish invaders, and that anyone who enters this sacred city will fall ill and die. In this modern-day archeological adventure and medical mystery, complete with deadly snakes and other terrifying jungle challenges, a scientific breakthrough enables a team of intrepid researchers to glimpse long buried secrets. (nonfiction)

Lucky Boy by Shanthi Sekaran

The devotion and anguish of motherhood is seen through the tale of two women bound together by their love for one boy. Soli, a young undocumented Mexican woman living in California finds that motherhood offers her an identity in a world where she feels invisible. When she is placed in immigrant detention, her son comes under the care of Kavya, an Indian-American wife crushed by her failed efforts to have a child. An immensely compassionate story. (fiction)

(over)

Pachinko by Min Jin Lee

Four generations of a poor Korean immigrant family fight to survive and thrive in this powerful exploration of what it means to be an exile in a hostile land. In the early 1900s Sunja, the adored daughter of a crippled fisherman, falls for a wealthy stranger. But when she discovers she is pregnant-and that her lover is married-she refuses to bring shame on her family. Instead, she accepts an offer of marriage from a gentle, sickly minister passing through on his way to Japan. Her decision to abandon her home, and to reject her son's powerful father, sets off a dramatic saga that will echo down through the generations. A National Book Award finalist. (fiction)

The Second Mrs. Hockaday by Susan Rivers

When Major Hockaday leaves to fight for the Confederacy, his new bride Placidia, a mere teenager living far from her family and completely unprepared to run a farm or raise a child, must endure the darkest days of the war on her own. By the time her husband returns two years later, Placidia is bound for jail, accused of having borne a child in his absence and murdering it. What really transpired in the two years he was away? Set against the backdrop of the Civil War, this is haunting and suspenseful. (fiction)



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1242 Wilmette Avenue
Wilmette, IL 60091
(847)256-5025
<http://www.wilmette.lib.il.us>