

BOOK CLUB READING LIST – 2024

1. The Color of Water, OR The Heaven and Earth Grocery Store, both by James McBride

The Color of Water

A nonfiction autobiography published in 1996 by the American author and musician James McBride. Subtitled *A Black Man's Tribute to his White Mother*, *The Color of Water* chronicles the author's challenges growing up in the 1960s and 70s as a mixed-race child of a White Jewish mother.

The Heaven and Earth Grocery Store

"A murder mystery locked inside a Great American Novel . . . Charming, smart, heart-blistering, and heart-healing." —Danez Smith, *The New York Times Book Review*

2. These Precious Days, Ann Patchett

The beloved *New York Times* bestselling author reflects on home, family, friendships and writing in this deeply personal collection of essays.

3. The Hundred Days of Lenni and Margot, Marian Cronin

The novel explores the edges of two lives in retrospect from 1940 to 2014. It's a tribute to two women, a 17-year-old and old an 83-year-old, both facing the fact of their existence on this earth, and the inevitable demise they face as their lives are shortening to a predictable end.

4. The House in the Cerulean Sea, T.J. Klune

A fun, warm-hearted ride. If you like upbeat stories, a little romance, fantastical creatures and other magical beings and just a touch of humor, there's a lot to like about *The House in the Cerulean Sea*.

5. The Light Pirate, Lily Brooks-Dalton

A timely dystopian story on climate change and its devastating effects on the earth and the people struggling to survive there. Told in four parts—power, water, light, and time—it follows a Floridian family as they prepare for an approaching hurricane in a landscape already wrecked by destructive weather patterns and rising sea levels.

6. Hello Beautiful, Ann Napolitano (February book, March discussion)

Ann Napolitano took the literary world by storm with her devastating, beautiful, tear-jerker of a novel *Dear Edward*, which was one of our

Best Books of 2020 and is now a TV series. And, she's done it again with *Hello Beautiful*. A story of family—the ones we're born to, the ones we marry into, and the ones we make—and how despite pain and fractured relationships, hope can be found. If you have siblings—you'll revel in the four Padavano sisters who are thick as thieves—until they aren't. Napolitano writes with gusto and compassion about the transition from idyllic youth to the complexities of adulthood: love and loss, cutting words and secrets, which both hold people together and tear them apart. Amazon

7. I Have Some Questions for You, Rebecca Makkai

Makkai has carefully crafted a novel that inhabits a strange interstitial space between a whodunit, a crime novel with a few elements plucked from found footage films, a story that investigates personal and collective memory, a critique of social media as a place where context is lost and no mistake goes unpunished, and a literary novel about a woman in flux reckoning with her past while trying to navigate her tumultuous present. (NPR)

8. West with Giraffes, Lynda Rutledge (January book, February discussion)

An emotional, rousing novel inspired by the incredible true story of two giraffes who made headlines and won the hearts of Depression-era America.

9. The Wild Silence or Landlines, Rayner Winn

Winn, author of two memoirs, *The Salt Path* (2019), shortlisted for the Costa Book Award, and *The Wild Silence* (2021) — fills her work with rich metaphors drawn from the natural world. In *Landlines*, after a relapse and a grim consultation, they do what they have done before in the face of disaster, and hit the trail. Not just any trail, but the toughest and wildest Britain has to offer: the Cape Wrath.

10. Signal Fires, Dani Shapiro

Signal Fires opens on a summer night in 1985. Three teenagers have been drinking. One of them gets behind the wheel of a car, and, in an instant, everything on Division Street changes. Each of their lives, and that of Ben Wilf, a young doctor who arrives on the scene, is shattered. For the Wilf family, the circumstances of that fatal accident will become the deepest kind of secret.

11. Astrophysics for People in a Hurry, Neil deGrasse Tyson or To Infinity and Beyond (his most recent publication) (December book, January discussion)

What is the nature of space and time? How do we fit within the universe? How does the universe fit within us? There's no better guide through these mind-expanding questions than acclaimed astrophysicist and best-selling author Neil deGrasse Tyson. But today, few of us have time to contemplate the cosmos. So Tyson brings the universe down to Earth succinctly and clearly, with sparkling wit....

12. Of Time and Turtles: Mending the World, Shell by Shattered Shell Sy Montgomery

Montgomery's heart-tugging conversations with teammates and her commitment to helping an octogenarian named Fire Chief reveal turtles to be perfect conduits for meditations on aging, disability and chosen family."

13. Tom Lake, Ann Patchett

Tom Lake is a meditation on youthful love, married love, and the lives parents have led before their children were born. Both hopeful and elegiac, it explores what it means to be happy even when the world is falling apart.

14. Trust, Hernan Diaz

At once an immersive story and a brilliant literary puzzle, **TRUST** engages the reader in a quest for the truth while confronting the deceptions that often live at the heart of personal relationships, the reality-warping force of capital, and the ease with which power can manipulate facts. A Pulitzer prize winner for Fiction, it is also one of the NYT Top Ten Books of 2022.

15. Spare, by Prince Harry, The Duke of Sussex

"Spare" is an unprecedented exposure of the Royal Family from the most deeply embedded of informants. The Prince in exile does not hesitate to detail the pettiness, the vanity, and the inglorious urge toward self-preservation of those who are now the monarchy's highest-ranking representatives.

16. Mad Honey, Jodi Picoult

Mad Honey is a riveting novel of suspense, an unforgettable love story, and a moving and powerful exploration of the secrets we keep and the risks we take in order to become ourselves.

Updated, 12/26/23