

2026 -Noon Book Club Selections

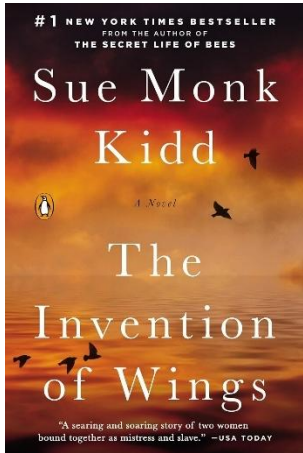


January 26th

The Invention of Wings.

Written by Sue Monk Kidd.

Fiction-1. (NLC-15, HMPL-1.) December 1—February 2



Hetty “Handful” Grimke, an urban slave in early nineteenth century Charleston, yearns for life beyond the suffocating walls that enclose her within the wealthy Grimke household. The Grimke’s daughter, Sarah, has known from an early age she is meant to do something large in the world, but she is hemmed in by the limits imposed on women.

Kidd’s sweeping novel is set in motion on Sarah’s eleventh birthday, when she is given ownership of ten year old Handful, who is to be her handmaid. We follow their remarkable journeys over the next thirty five years, as both strive for a life of their own, dramatically shaping each other’s destinies and forming a complex relationship marked by guilt, defiance, estrangement and the uneasy ways of love.

Inspired by the historical figure of Sarah Grimke, Kidd goes beyond the record to flesh out the rich interior lives of all of her characters, both real and invented, including Handful’s cunning mother, Charlotte, who courts danger in her search for something better.

This exquisitely written novel is a triumph of storytelling that looks with unswerving eyes at a devastating wound in American history, through women whose struggles for liberation, empowerment, and expression will leave no reader unmoved.

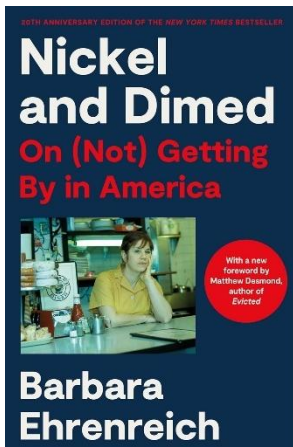
Rating: ___ Thoughts:

February 23rd

Nickel and Dime: On (Not) Getting By in America.

Written by Barbara Ehrenreich.

Non-Fiction-1. (NLC-14, HMPL-1,) January 26—March 2



Millions of Americans work full time, year round, for poverty-level wages. In 1998, Barbara Ehrenreich decided to join them. She was inspired in part by the rhetoric surrounding welfare reform, which promised that a job—any job—can be the ticket to a better life. But how does anyone survive, let alone prosper, on \$6 an hour?

To find out, Ehrenreich left her home, took the cheapest lodgings she could find, and accepted whatever jobs she was offered. Moving from Florida to Maine to Minnesota, she worked as a waitress, a hotel maid, a cleaning woman, a nursing-home aide, and a Wal-Mart sales clerk. She lived in trailer parks and crumbling residential motels. Very quickly, she discovered that no job is truly "unskilled," that even the lowliest occupations require exhausting mental and muscular effort. She also learned that one job is not enough; you need at least two if you intend to live indoors.

Nickel and Dime reveals low-rent America in all its tenacity, anxiety, and surprising generosity—a land of Big Boxes, fast food, and a thousand desperate stratagems for survival. Read it for the smoldering clarity of Ehrenreich's perspective and for a rare view of how "prosperity" looks from the bottom. And now, in a new foreword, Matthew Desmond, author of *Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City*, explains why, twenty years on in America, Nickel and Dime is more relevant than ever.

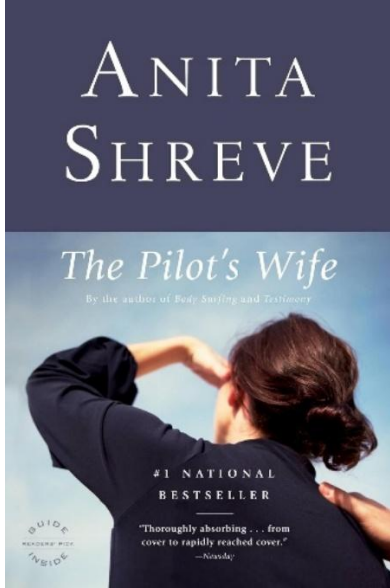
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March 30th

The Pilot's Wife.

Written by Anita Shreve.

Fiction-2. (NLC-33, HMPL-1) February 23—April 6



As a pilot's wife, Kathryn has learned to expect both intense exhilaration and long periods alone, but nothing has prepared her for a late-night knock that lets her know her husband has died in a crash.

Until now, Kathryn Lyons's life has been peaceful if unextraordinary: a satisfying job teaching high school in the New England mill town of her childhood; a picture-perfect home by the ocean; a precocious, independent-minded fifteen-year-old daughter; and a happy marriage whose occasional dull passages she attributes to the unavoidable deadening of time.

As Kathryn struggles with her grief, she descends into a maelstrom of publicity stirred up by the modern hunger for the details of tragedy. Even before the plane is located in waters off the Irish coast, the relentless scrutiny of her husband's life begins to bring a bizarre personal mystery into focus. Could there be any truth to the increasingly disturbing rumors that he had a secret life?

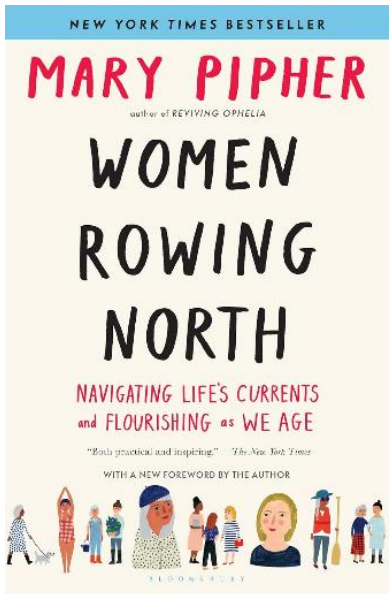
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April 27th

Women Rowing North: Navigating Life's Currents and Flourishing as We Age.

Written by Mary Pipher.

Non-Fiction-2. (NLC-10, HMPL-1,) March 30-May 4



Women growing older contend with ageism, misogyny, and loss. Yet as Mary Pipher shows, most older women are deeply happy and filled with gratitude for the gifts of life. Their struggles help them grow into the authentic, empathetic, and wise people they have always wanted to be.

In *Women Rowing North*, Pipher offers a timely examination of the cultural and developmental issues women face as they age. Drawing on her own experience as daughter, sister, mother, grandmother, caregiver, clinical psychologist, and cultural anthropologist, she explores ways women can cultivate resilient responses to the challenges they face. “If we can keep our wits about us, think clearly, and manage our emotions skillfully,” Pipher writes, “we will experience a joyous time of our lives. If we have planned carefully and packed properly, if we have good maps and guides, the journey can be transcendent.”

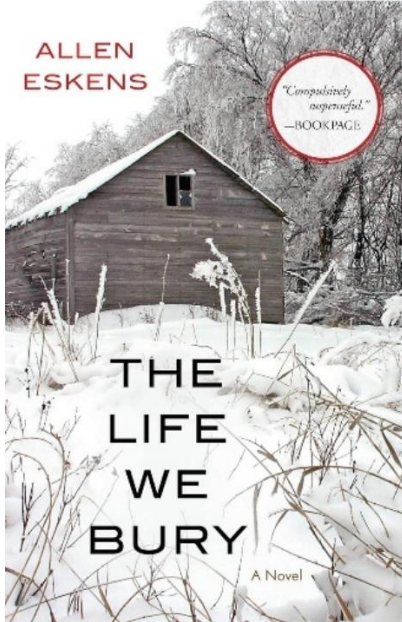
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May 18th

The Life We Bury.

Written by Allen Eskens.

Fiction-3. (BELLEVUE-10, HMPL-1,) April 27—May 25



College student Joe Talbert has the modest goal of completing a writing assignment for an English class. His task is to interview a stranger and write a brief biography of the person. With deadlines looming, Joe heads to a nearby nursing home to find a willing subject. There he meets Carl Iverson, and soon nothing in Joe's life is ever the same. Carl is a dying Vietnam veteran--and a convicted murderer. With only a few months to live, he has been medically paroled to a nursing home, after spending thirty years in prison for the crimes of rape and murder. As Joe writes about Carl's life, especially Carl's valor in Vietnam, he cannot reconcile the heroism of the soldier with the despicable acts of the convict. Joe, along with his skeptical female neighbor, throws himself into uncovering the truth, but he is hamstrung in his efforts by having to deal with his dangerously dysfunctional mother, the guilt of leaving his autistic brother vulnerable, and a haunting childhood memory. Thread by thread, Joe unravels the tapestry of Carl's conviction. But as he and Lila dig deeper into the circumstances of the crime, the stakes grow higher. Will Joe discover the truth before it's too late to escape the fallout

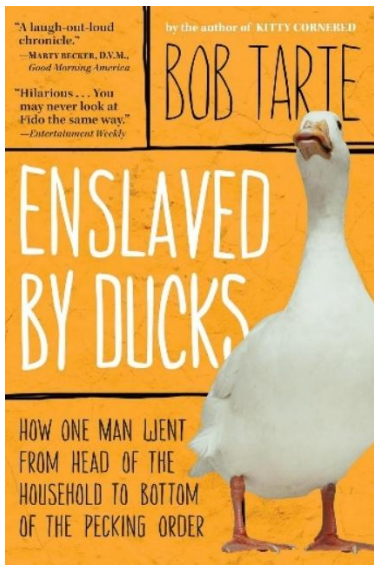
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June 29th

Enslaved by Ducks.

Written by Bob Tarte.

Non-Fiction-3. (NLC-15, HMPL-1,) May 18—July 6



When Bob Tarte bought a house in rural Michigan, he was counting on a tranquil haven. Then Bob married Linda. She wanted a rabbit, which seemed innocuous enough until the bunny chewed through their electrical wiring. And that was just the beginning. Before long, Bob found himself constructing cages, buying feed, clearing duck waste, and spoon-feeding a menagerie of furry and feathery residents. His life of quiet serenity vanished, and he unwittingly became a servant to a relentlessly demanding family. "They dumbfounded him, controlled and teased him, took their share of his flesh, stole his heart" (Kirkus Reviews).

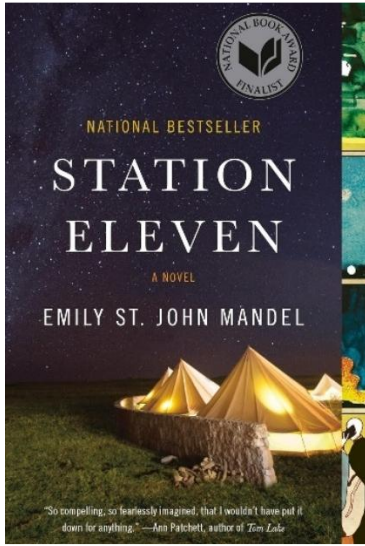
Whether commiserating with Bob over the fate of those who are slaves to their animals or regarding his story as a cautionary tale about the rigors of animal ownership, readers on both sides of the fence have found Tarte's story of his chaotic squawking household irresistible—and irresistibly funny.

Rating: ___ Thoughts:

**July 27th,
Station Eleven.**

Written by Emily St. John Mandel.

Fiction-4. (NLC-27, HMPL-1.) June 29—August 3



An audacious, darkly glittering novel set in the eerie days following civilization's collapse, *Station Eleven* tells the spellbinding story of a nomadic group of actors roaming the scattered outposts of the Great Lakes region, risking everything for art and humanity.

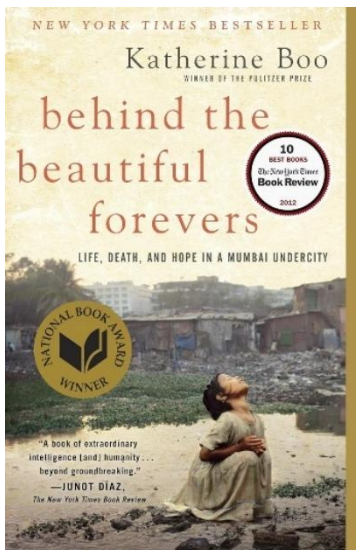
It is fifteen years after a flu pandemic wiped out most of the world's population. Kirsten is an actress with the Traveling Symphony, a small troupe moving over the gutted landscape, performing Shakespeare and music for scattered communities of survivors. But when they arrive in the outpost of St. Deborah by the Water, they encounter a violent prophet who digs graves for anyone who dares to leave. Spanning decades, moving back and forth in time, and vividly depicting life before and after the disaster brought everyone here, this suspenseful, elegiac novel is rife with beauty, telling a story about the relationships that sustain us.

Rating: ___ Thoughts:

**August 31st
behind the beautiful forevers.**

Written by Katherine Boo.

Non-Fiction-4. (HMPL-1.) July 27—September 7



In this breathtaking book by Pulitzer Prize winner Katherine Boo, a bewildering age of global change and inequality is made human through the dramatic story of families striving toward a better life in Annawadi, a makeshift settlement in the shadow of luxury hotels near the Mumbai airport.

As India starts to prosper, the residents of Annawadi are electric with hope. Abdul, an enterprising teenager, sees “a fortune beyond counting” in the recyclable garbage that richer people throw away. Meanwhile Asha, a woman of formidable ambition, has identified a shadier route to the middle class. With a little luck, her beautiful daughter, Annawadi’s “most-everything girl,” might become its first female college graduate. And even the poorest children, like the young thief Kalu, feel themselves inching closer to their dreams. But then Abdul is falsely accused in a shocking tragedy; terror and global recession rock the city; and suppressed tensions over religion, caste, sex, power, and economic envy turn brutal.

With intelligence, humor, and deep insight into what connects people to one another in an era of tumultuous change, *Behind the Beautiful Forevers*, based on years of uncompromising reporting, carries the reader headlong into one of the twenty-first century’s hidden worlds—and into the hearts of families impossible to forget.

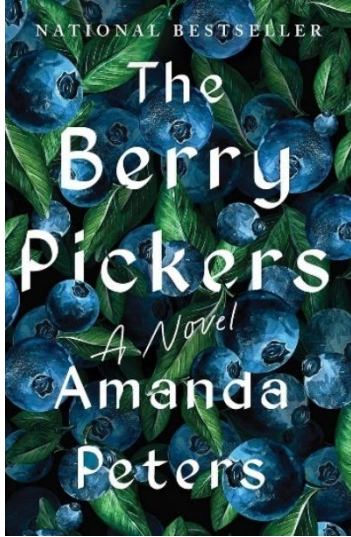
Rating: ___ Thoughts:

September 28th

The Berry Pickers.

Written by Amanda Peters.

Fiction-5. (BELLEVUE -10, HMPL-1) August 31—September 7



July 1962. Following in the tradition of Indigenous workers from Nova Scotia, a Mi'kmaq family arrives in Maine to pick blueberries for the summer. Weeks later, four-year-old Ruthie, the family's youngest child, vanishes. She is last seen by her six-year-old brother, Joe, sitting on a favorite rock at the edge of a berry field. Joe will remain distraught by his sister's disappearance for years to come.

In Maine, a young girl named Norma grows up as the only child of an affluent family. Her father is emotionally distant, her mother frustratingly overprotective. Norma is often troubled by recurring dreams and visions that seem more like memories than imagination. As she grows older, Norma slowly comes to realize there is something her parents aren't telling her. Unwilling to abandon her intuition, she will spend decades trying to uncover this family secret.

“An unforgettable exploration of grief, love, and kin,” (The Boston Globe), this show stopping debut by a vibrant new voice in fiction is a riveting novel about the search for truth, the shadow of trauma, and the persistence of love across time.

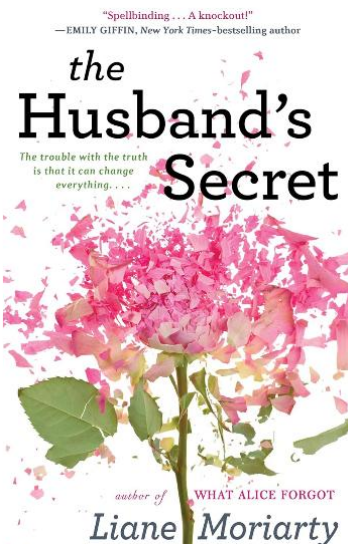
Rating: ___ Thoughts:

October 26th

The Husband's Secret.

Written by Liane Moriarty.

Fiction-6. (NLC-13, HMPL-1) September 29—October 30



My darling Cecilia,
If you're reading this, then I've died...

Imagine your husband wrote you a letter, to be opened after his death. Imagine, too, that the letter contains his deepest, darkest secret—something with the potential to destroy not only the life you built together, but the lives of others as well. And then imagine that you stumble across that letter while your husband is still very much alive...

Cecilia Fitzpatrick has achieved it all—she's an incredibly successful businesswoman, a pillar of her small community, and a devoted wife and mother. But that letter is about to change everything—and not just for her. There are other women who barely know Cecilia—or each other—but they, too, are about to feel the earth-shattering repercussions of her husband's secret.

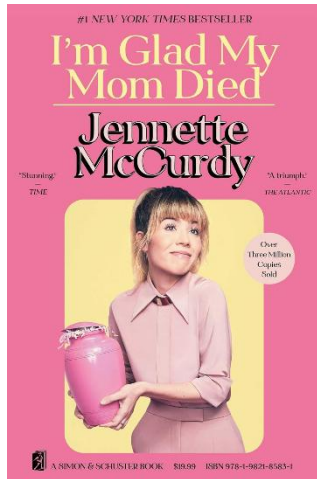
Rating: ___ Thoughts:

November 30th

I'm Glad My Mom Died.

Written by Jennette McCurdy.

Non-Fiction-5. (NLC-5, HMPL-1) October 30—December 7



Jennette McCurdy was six years old when she had her first acting audition. Her mother’s dream was for her only daughter to become a star, and Jennette would do anything to make her mother happy. So she went along with what Mom called “calorie restriction,” eating little and weighing herself five times a day. She endured extensive at-home makeovers while Mom chided, “Your eyelashes are invisible, okay? You think Dakota Fanning doesn’t tint hers?” She was even showered by Mom until age sixteen while sharing her diaries, email, and all her income.

In *I’m Glad My Mom Died*, Jennette recounts all this in unflinching detail—just as she chronicles what happens when the dream finally comes true. Cast in a new Nickelodeon series called *iCarly*, she is thrust into fame. Though Mom is ecstatic, emailing fan club moderators and getting on a first-name basis with the paparazzi (“Hi Gale!”), Jennette is riddled with anxiety, shame, and self-loathing, which manifest into eating disorders, addiction, and a series of unhealthy relationships. These issues only get worse when, soon after taking the lead in the *iCarly* spinoff *Sam & Cat* alongside Ariana Grande, her mother dies of cancer. Finally, after discovering therapy and quitting acting, Jennette embarks on recovery and decides for the first time in her life what she really wants.

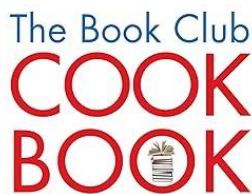
Told with refreshing candor and dark humor, *I’m Glad My Mom Died* is an inspiring story of resilience, independence, and the joy of shampooing your own hair.

Rating: ___ Thoughts:

December 14th

Cookbook Book Club

Your Pick!



Recipes and Food for Thought from Your Book Club's Favorite Books and Authors

Featuring new entries on bestselling titles, including:
• *Wine for Dummies* by Sara Gruen
• *Snow Flower and the Secret Fire* by Lisa See
• *Getting Lost* by Abraham Verghese

REVISED & UPDATED

Judy Gelman and Vicki Levy Krupp
Creators of bookclubcookbook.com



Let’s try something new! Choose any cookbook, pick a recipe, and make it! Bring your dish (optional), the recipe, and the cookbook you used. We’ll share what we made, what we learned, and whether the cookbook is worth recommending.

Join us for a fun, delicious afternoon of cooking inspiration and community!

Rating: ___ Thoughts:

Books Suggested by Other Members:
