

Adult Book Group Kits

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Each kit includes:

- *Multiple copies of the book*
- *Book club resources*
- *Discussion questions*
- *Information about the author*
- *Plastic storage box for easy transport*



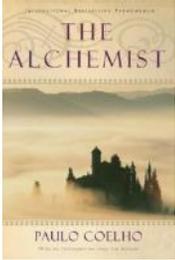
Book group kits can be picked up at the desk at any of our 33 member libraries. To request a kit, simply search the online catalog for the series “Book Group Kit”, and then place a hold for the title you’d like.

Many thanks to the Friends of the Tompkins County Public Library, Southworth Library Association, Hazard Library in Poplar Ridge, Aurora Free Library, Lansing Community Library for making this collection possible.



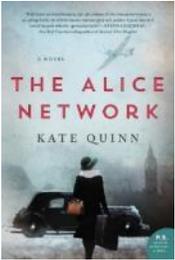
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Updated June 2022



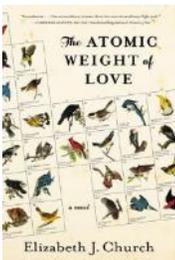
***The Alchemist* by Paulo Coelho**

Paulo Coelho's masterpiece tells the mystical story of Santiago, an Andalusian shepherd boy who yearns to travel in search of a worldly treasure. His quest will lead him to riches far different--and far more satisfying--than he ever imagined. Santiago's journey teaches us about the essential wisdom of listening to our hearts, of recognizing opportunity and learning to read the omens strewn along life's path, and, most importantly, to follow our dreams.



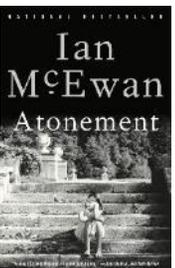
***The Alice Network* by Kate Quinn**

It's 1947 and American college girl Charlie St. Clair is pregnant, unmarried, and on the verge of being thrown out of her very proper family. She's also nursing a fervent belief that her beloved French cousin Rose, who disappeared in Nazi-occupied France during the war, might still be alive somewhere. So when Charlie's family banishes her to Europe to have her "little problem" take care of, Charlie breaks free and heads to London determined to find out what happened to the cousin she loves like a sister.



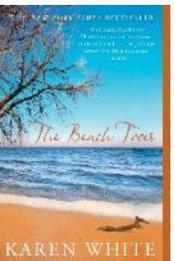
***The Atomic Weight of Love* by Elizabeth J. Church**

Capturing the claustrophobic eras of 1940s and 1950s America, *The Atomic Weight of Love* also examines the changing roles of women during the decades that followed. And in Meridian Wallace we find an unforgettable heroine whose metamorphosis shows how the women's movement opened up the world for a whole generation.



***Atonement* by Ian McEwan**

On the hottest day of the summer of 1935, thirteen-year-old Briony Tallis sees her sister, Cecilia, strip off her clothes and plunge into the fountain in the garden of their country house. Watching her is Robbie Turner, her childhood friend who, like Cecilia, has recently come down from Cambridge. By the end of that day, the lives of all three will have been changed forever.



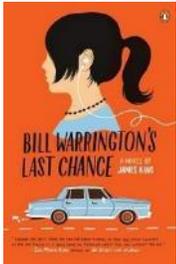
***The Beach Trees* by Karen White**

From the time she was twelve, Julie Holt knew what a random tragedy can do to a family. At that tender age, her little sister disappeared--never to be found. It was a loss that slowly eroded the family bonds she once relied on. As an adult with a prestigious job in the arts, Julie meets a struggling artist who reminds her so much of her sister, she can't help feeling protective. It is a friendship that begins a long and painful process of healing for Julie, leading her to a house on the Gulf Coast, ravaged by hurricane Katrina, and to stories of family that take her deep into the past.



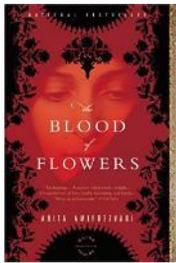
***Bel Canto* by Ann Patchett**

Somewhere in South America at the home of the country's vice president, a lavish birthday party is being held in honor of Mr. Hosokawa, a powerful Japanese businessman. Roxanne Coss, opera's most revered soprano, has mesmerized the guests with her singing. It is a perfect evening until a band of terrorists breaks in, taking the entire party hostage. But what begins as a life-threatening scenario slowly evolves into something quite different. Friendship, compassion, and the chance for great love lead the characters to forget the real danger that has been set in motion and cannot be stopped.



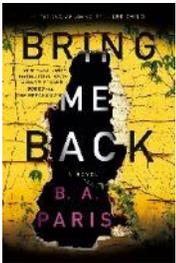
***Bill Warrington's Last Chance* by James King**

After realizing he has Alzheimer's and has a short time to redeem himself, Bill Warrington sets out to restore his relationship with his children. Absconding with his fifteen-year-old granddaughter, Bill embarks on a cross-country tour, leaving behind clues so that his children can follow him.



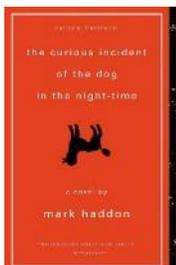
***The Blood of Flowers* by Anita Amirrezvani**

In 17th century Persia a young girl whose father died leaving her no dowry worries about her fate. She hopes her talent as a brilliant designer of carpets will help her keep her dignity.



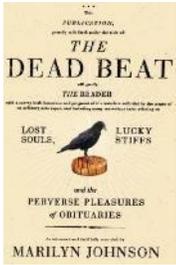
***Bring Me Back* by B.A. Paris**

She went missing. He moved on. A whole world of secrets remained, until now. Finn and Layla are young, in love, and on vacation. They're driving along the highway when Finn decides to stop at a service station to use the restroom. He hops out of the car, locks the doors behind him, and goes inside. When he returns Layla is gone, never to be seen again. That is the story Finn told to the police. But it is not the whole story. Ten years later Finn is engaged to Layla's sister, Ellen. A tour de force of psychological suspense, *Bring Me Back* will have you questioning everything and everyone until its stunning climax.



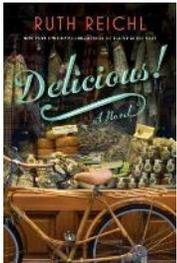
***The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* by Mark Haddon**

Christopher John Francis Boone knows all the countries of the world and their capitals and every prime number up to 7,057. He relates well to animals but has no understanding of human emotions. He cannot stand to be touched. And he detests the color yellow. This improbable story of Christopher's quest to investigate the suspicious death of a neighborhood dog makes for one of the most captivating, unusual, and widely heralded novels in recent years.



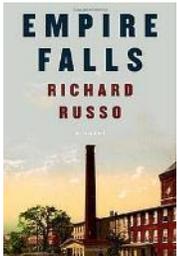
***The Dead Beat: Lost Souls, Lucky Stiffs, and the Perverse Pleasures of Obituaries* by Marilyn Johnson**

Obituaries are history as it is happening. Was he a success or a failure, lucky or doomed, older than I am or younger? Did she know how to live? Where else can you celebrate the life of the pharmacist who moonlighted as a spy, the genius behind Sea Monkeys, the school lunch lady who spent her evenings as a ballroom hostess? No wonder so many readers skip the news and the sports and go directly to the obituary page. Enthralled by the fascinating lives that were marching out of this world, Marilyn Johnson tumbled into the obits page to find out what made it so lively.



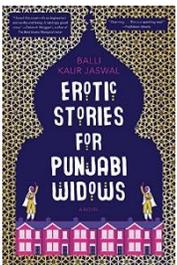
***Delicious!* by Ruth Reichl**

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.



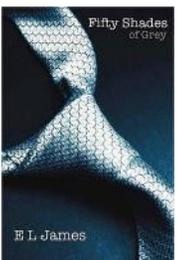
***Falls* by Richard Russo**

Milo Roby tries to hold his family together while working at the Empire Grill in the once-successful logging town of Empire Falls, Maine, with his partner, Mrs. Whiting, who is the heir to a faded logging and textile legacy.



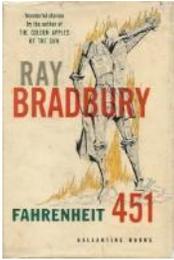
***Erotic Stories for Punjabi Widows* by Balli Kaur Jaswal**

Nikki has spent most of her life distancing herself from the traditional Sikh community. After her father's death she takes a job teaching a creative writing course in the heart of the Punjabi community. When one of the women students brings a book of erotica to class, Nicki uses it as the basis for helping these modest women unleash creativity by telling their own stories.



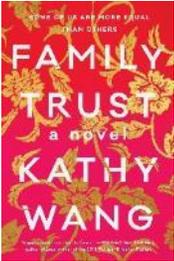
Erotica (Genre Kit)

The Erotica Kit is bound to spark conversation like no other, especially since the diverse genre of erotica has been topping many bestsellers lists in recent years. This thematic kit contains 13 different works, including selections such as: the steamy bestseller *Fifty Shades of Grey*; the artist Anais Nin's lyrical, surreal classic *Little Birds*; and the memoir *A Round-Heeled Woman* by a retired schoolteacher.



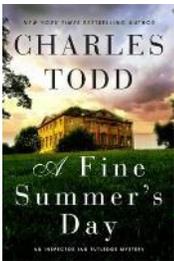
***Fahrenheit 451* by Ray Bradbury**

In a society in which books are outlawed, Montag, a regimented fireman in charge of burning the forbidden volumes, meets a revolutionary school teacher who dares to read. Suddenly he finds himself a hunted fugitive, forced to choose not only between two women, but between personal safety and intellectual freedom.



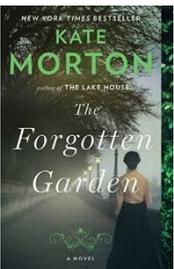
***Family Trust* by Kathy Wang**

Meet Stanley Huang: father, husband, ex-husband, man of unpredictable tastes and temper, newly diagnosed with pancreatic cancer. For his son Fred, the inheritance Stanley has long alluded to would soothe the pain caused by years of professional disappointment. Stanley's daughter, Kate, a middle manager with one of Silicon Valley's most prestigious tech companies, manages the demands of her boss and the needs of her two young children all while supporting her would-be entrepreneur husband. Stanley's second wife, Mary Zhu, has devoted herself to making her husband comfortable in every way, but lately her commitment has waned. Linda Liang, his first wife, worked hard to ensure their financial security, and is determined to see her children get their due. Unexpected challenges lead them all to discover what they most value.



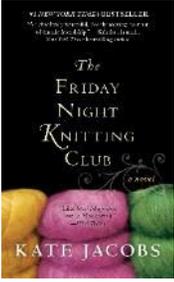
***A Fine Summer's Day: An Inspector Ian Rutledge mystery* by Charles Todd**

On a fine summer's day in June 1914, Ian Rutledge is planning to propose to a woman he deeply loves, despite hits from his family and friends that she may not be the most suitable choice for a policeman's wife. To the north, another man in love--a Scottish Highlander named Hamish MacLeod--asks his own sweetheart to marry him. Back in England, a son grieves for his mother, dredging up a dark injustice that will trigger a series of murders that Rutledge must solve. With every moment at stake, he sets out to right a terrible wrong--an odyssey that will eventually force him to choose between the Yard and his country, between love and duty, and between honor and truth.



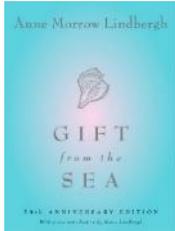
***The Forgotten Garden* by Kate Morton**

A tiny girl is abandoned on a ship headed for Australia in 1913. She arrives completely alone with nothing but a small suitcase containing a few clothes and a single book--a beautiful volume of fairy tales. She is taken in by the dockmaster and his wife and raised as their own. On her 21st birthday they tell her the truth, and with her sense of self shattered and with very little to go on, "Nell" sets out on a journey to England to try to trace her story, to find her real identity. Her quest leads her to Blackhurst Manor on the Cornish coast and the secrets of the doomed Mountrachet family. But it is not until her granddaughter, Cassandra, takes up the search after Nell's death that all the pieces of the puzzle are assembled. Cassandra discovers the forgotten garden of the book's title and is able to unlock the secrets of the beautiful book of fairy tales.



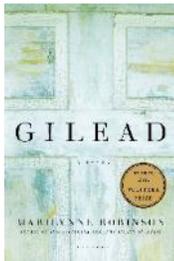
***The Friday Night Knitting Club* by Kate Jacobs**

Customers at Walker and Daughter yarn shop find they get more than helpful tips on knitting when they become a part of the Friday Night Knitting Club. Gathering for their weekly knitting club at a small yarn shop on Manhattan's Upper West Side, a group of friends shares such challenges as raising children, navigating the ups and downs of their careers, and pursuing uncertain relationships.



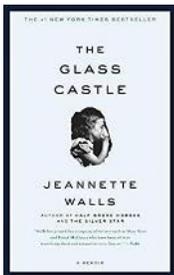
***Gift from the Sea* by Anne Morrow Lindbergh**

In *Gift from the Sea*, Anne Morrow Lindbergh shares her meditations on youth and age; love and marriage; peace, solitude and contentment as she set them down during a brief vacation by the sea. Drawing inspiration from the shells on the shore, Lindbergh's musings on the shape of a woman's life bring new understanding to both men and women at any stage of life.



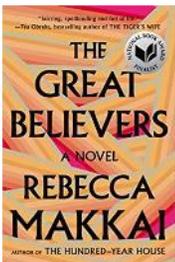
***Gilead* by Marilynne Robinson**

An intimate tale of three generations from the Civil War to the twentieth century, this novel explores the relationship between fathers and sons and the spiritual battles that still rage at America's heart. As the Reverend John Ames approaches the hour of his own death, he writes a letter to his son chronicling three previous generations of his family, a story that stretches back to the Civil War and reveals uncomfortable family secrets.



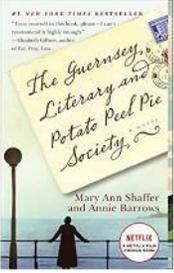
***The Glass Castle: A Memoir* by Jeannette Walls**

Rex and Rose Mary and their four children lived like nomads, moving among Southwest desert towns, camping in the mountains. Rex was a charismatic, brilliant man who, when sober, captured his children's imagination, teaching them how to embrace life fearlessly. Rose Mary painted and wrote and couldn't stand the responsibility of providing for her family. As the dysfunction escalated, the children had to fend for themselves, supporting one another as they found the resources and will to leave home. Yet Walls describes her parents with deep affection in this tale of unconditional love in a family that, despite its profound flaws, gave her the fiery determination to carve out a successful life.



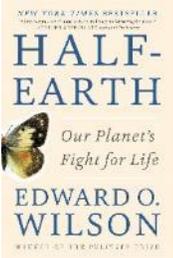
***The Great Believers* by Rebecca Makkai**

In 1985, Yale Tishman, the development director for an art gallery in Chicago, is about to pull off an amazing coup, bringing in an extraordinary collection of 1920s paintings as a gift to the gallery. Yet as his career begins to flourish, the carnage of the AIDS epidemic grows around him. One by one, his friends are dying and after his friend Nico's funeral, the virus circles closer and closer to Yale himself. Soon the only person he has left is Fiona, Nico's little sister. Thirty years later, Fiona is in Paris tracking down her estranged daughter who disappeared into a cult. While staying with an old friend, a famous photographer who documented the Chicago crisis, she finds herself finally grappling with the devastating ways AIDS affected her life and her relationship with her daughter.



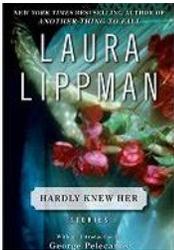
***The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society* by Mary Ann Shaffer and Annie Barrows**

As London is emerging from the shadow of World War II, writer Juliet Ashton discovers her next subject in a book club on Guernsey--a club born as a spur-of-the-moment alibi after its members are discovered breaking curfew by the Germans occupying their island.



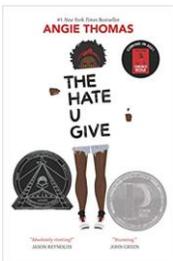
***Half-Earth: Our Planet's Fight for Life* by Edward O. Wilson**

In order to stave off the mass extinction of species, including our own, we must move swiftly to preserve the biodiversity of our planet, says Edward O. Wilson in his most impassioned book to date. Half-Earth argues that the situation facing us is too large to be solved piecemeal and proposes a solution commensurate with the magnitude of the problem: dedicate fully half the surface of the Earth to nature.



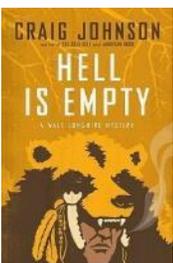
***Hardly Knew Her: Stories* by Laura Lippman**

A compendium of the author's short stories is complemented by a new novella featuring Baltimore private investigator Tess Monaghan.



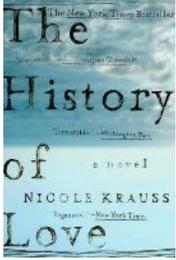
***The Hate U Give* by Angie Thomas**

Sixteen-year-old Starr Carter moves between two worlds: the poor neighborhood where she lives and the fancy suburban prep school she attends. The uneasy balance between these worlds is shattered when Starr witnesses the fatal shooting of her childhood best friend Khalil at the hands of a police officer. Khalil was unarmed. Soon afterward, his death is a national headline. Some are calling him a thug, maybe even a drug dealer and a gangbanger. Protesters are taking to the streets in Khalil's name. Some cops and the local drug lord try to intimidate Starr and her family. What everyone wants to know is: what really went down that night? And the only person alive who can answer that is Starr. But what Starr does or does not say could upend her community. It could also endanger her life



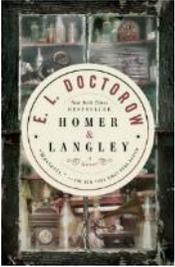
***Hell is Empty* by Craig Johnson**

Transporting a confessed murderer only to learn that the man's crime falls under his jurisdiction and that the killer has escaped, Sheriff Walt Longmire taps insights from Indian mysticism and Dante's "Inferno" in a manhunt through the icy Cloud Peak Wilderness Area.



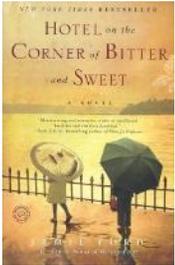
***The History of Love* by Nicole Krauss**

Sixty years after a book's publication, its author remembers his lost love and missing son, while a teenage girl named for one of the book's characters seeks her namesake, as well as a cure for her widowed mother's loneliness.



***Homer & Langley* by E.L. Doctorow**

A free imaginative rendering of the lives of New York's fabled Collyer brothers depicts Homer and Langley as recluses in their once grand Fifth Avenue mansion, facing odyssean perils as they struggle to survive the wars, political movements, and technological advances of the last century.



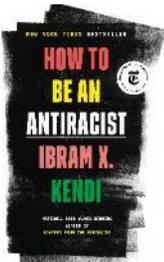
***Hotel on the Corner of Bitter and Sweet* by Jamie Ford**

Set in the ethnic neighborhoods of Seattle during World War II and Japanese American internment camps of the era, this debut novel tells the heartwarming story of widower Henry Lee, his father, and his first love Keiko Okabe.



***House of Sand and Fog* by Andre Dubus III**

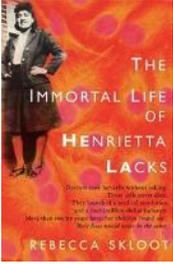
When a former colonel of the Iranian Air Force and his family purchase a small California home at auction, they are faced with a great conflict as the former owner and her police officer boyfriend fight to get it back at any cost.



***How to Be an Antiracist* by Ibram X. Kendi**

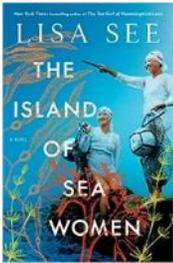
Combines ethics, history, law, and science with a personal narrative to describe how to move beyond the awareness of racism and contribute to making society just and equitable. Kendi takes readers through a widening circle of antiracist ideas--from the most basic concepts to visionary possibilities--that will help readers see all forms of racism clearly, understand their poisonous consequences, and work to oppose them in our systems and in ourselves. This is an essential work for anyone who wants to go beyond the awareness of racism to the next step: contributing to the formation of a just and equitable society.

Two separate kits are available for checkout.



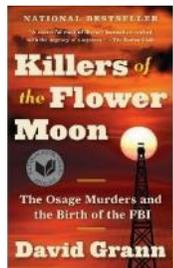
***The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks* by Rebecca Skloot**

Her name was Henrietta Lacks, but scientists know her as HeLa. She was a poor Southern tobacco farmer who worked the same land as her slave ancestors, yet her cells—taken without her knowledge—became one of the most important tools in medicine. HeLa cells were vital for developing the polio vaccine; uncovered secrets of cancer, viruses, and the atom bomb's effects. Yet Henrietta Lacks remains virtually unknown, buried in an unmarked grave. As Rebecca Skloot so brilliantly shows, the story of the Lacks family—past and present—is inextricably connected to the dark history of experimentation on African Americans, the birth of bioethics, and the legal battles over whether we control the stuff we are made of.



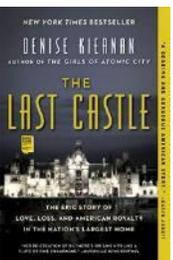
***The Island of Sea Women* by Lisa See**

Mi-ja and Young-sook, two girls living on the Korean island of Jeju, are best friends that come from very different backgrounds. When they are old enough, they begin working in the sea with their village's all-female diving collective, led by Young-sook's mother. As the girls take up their positions as baby divers, they know they are beginning a life of excitement and responsibility but also danger. The Island of Sea Women is an epoch set over many decades, beginning during a period of Japanese colonialism in the 1930s and 1940s, followed by World War II, the Korean War and its aftermath, through the era of cell phones and wet suits for the women divers.



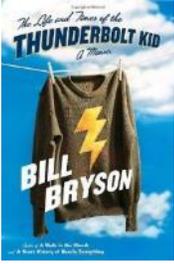
***Killers of the Flower Moon: The Osage Murders and the Birth of the FBI* by David Grann**

In the 1920s, the richest people per capita in the world were members of the Osage Indian nation in Oklahoma. After oil was discovered beneath their land, they rode in chauffeured automobiles, built mansions, and sent their children to study in Europe. Then, one by one, the Osage began to be killed off. The family of an Osage woman, Mollie Burkhart, became a prime target. Her relatives were shot and poisoned. And it was just the beginning, as more and more members of the tribe began to die under mysterious circumstances. As the death toll climbed to more than twenty-four, the FBI took up the case. Together with the Osage they began to expose one of the most chilling conspiracies in American history.



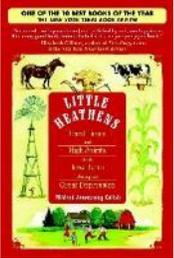
***The Last Castle: The epic story of love, loss, and American royalty in the nation's largest home* by Denise Kiernan**

Documents the story of the Gilded Age mansion Biltmore, tracing George Vanderbilt's construction of his European-style estate and the efforts of his bride, Edith Stuyvesant Dresser, to become its protector in the face of changing fortunes and times.



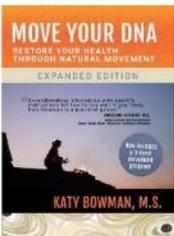
***The Life and Times of the Thunderbolt Kid* by Bill Bryson**

Like millions of his generational peers, Bill Bryson grew up with a rich fantasy life as a superhero. In his case, he ran around his house and neighborhood wearing a jersey with a thunderbolt on it and a towel about his neck, vanquishing evildoers--in his head--as "The Thunderbolt Kid." Using his fantasy-life persona as a springboard, Bryson re-creates the life of his family in the 1950s in all its transcendent normality--a life at once familiar to us all and as far away and unreachable as another galaxy.



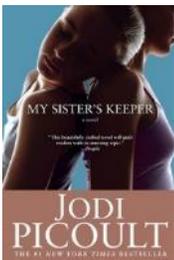
***Little Heathens: Hard times and high spirits on an Iowa farm during the Great Depression* by Mildred Armstrong Kalish**

A memoir of the author's youth, Little Heathens offers a moving first-hand account of daily life's challenges and the importance of family and neighbors in such difficult times. The novel Children of the Dust by Betty Grant Henshaw is a similarly personal account of how Henshaw's family struggled after they were forced to flee their barren Oklahoma farm and seek work in California.



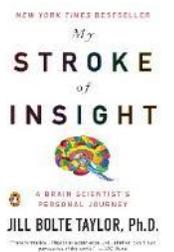
***Move Your DNA: Restore Your Health through Natural Movement* by Katy Bowman**

Hailed as offering a pioneering and paradigm-shifting perspective on exercise, this book: explains how movement works right down to the cellular level; examines the differences between the movements in a typical hunter-gatherer's life and the movements in a convenience-riddled lifestyle; discusses the issues with using exercise like movement vitamins instead of addressing the deeper issue of a poor movement diet; contains a three-level movement program to help those of all strengths and fitness levels transition to a movement-rich lifestyle. Move Your DNA contains corrective exercises, habit modifications, and simple lifestyle changes to free ourselves from the diseases of affluence and discover our naturally healthy, reflex-driven selves.



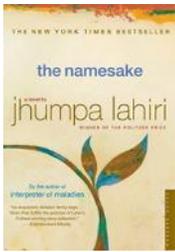
***My Sister's Keeper* by Jodi Picoult**

Conceived to provide a bone marrow match for her leukemia-stricken sister, teenage Kate begins to question her moral obligations in light of countless medical procedures and decides to fight for the right to make decisions about her own body.



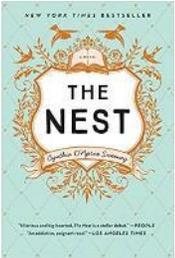
***My Stroke of Insight: A Brain Scientist's Personal Journey* by Jill Bolte Taylor**

On December 10, 1996, Taylor, a brain scientist, experienced a massive stroke. She observed her own mind deteriorate. Now she shares her unique perspective on the brain and its capacity for recovery.



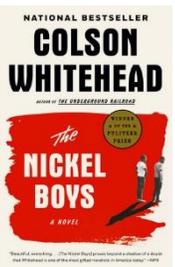
***The Namesake* by Jhumpa Lahiri**

When his Indian immigrant parents give him an odd name, a boy must struggle towards manhood suffering the burdens of this name as well as the conflicting loyalties of his heritage.



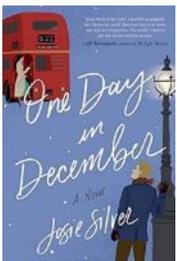
***The Nest* by Cynthia D'Aprix Sweeney**

Every family has its problems. But even among the most troubled, the Plumb family stands out as spectacularly dysfunctional. Years of simmering tensions finally reach a breaking point on an unseasonably cold afternoon in New York City as Melody, Beatrice, and Jack Plumb gather to confront their charismatic and reckless older brother, Leo, freshly released from rehab. Months earlier, an inebriated Leo got behind the wheel of a car with a nineteen-year-old waitress as his passenger. The ensuing accident has endangered the Plumbs joint trust fund, "The Nest" which they are months away from finally receiving.



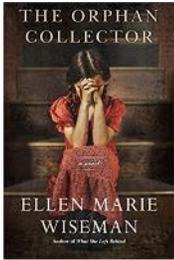
***The Nickel Boys* by Colson Whitehead**

1960s Florida. Kept on the straight and narrow by his grandmother, Elwood Curtis is about to enroll in the local black college. But for a black boy in the Jim Crow South, one mistake is enough to destroy the future. He is sentenced to a juvenile reformatory called the Nickel Academy, whose mission statement says it provides "physical, intellectual and moral training" so the delinquent boys in their charge can become "honorable and honest men." In reality, the sadistic staff beats and sexually abuses the students, corrupt officials and locals steal food and supplies, and any boy who resists is likely to disappear "out back." He meets Turner, who knows that the world is crooked, and that the only way to survive is to scheme and avoid trouble. A decision creates repercussions that will echo down the decades.



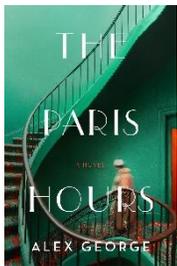
***One Day in December* by Josie Silver**

Two people. Ten chances. One unforgettable love story. Laurie is pretty sure love at first sight doesn't exist anywhere but the movies. But then, through a misted-up bus window one snowy December day, she sees a man who she knows instantly is the one. Their eyes meet, there's a moment of pure magic...and then her bus drives away. Certain they're fated to find each other again, Laurie spends a year scanning every bus stop and cafe in London for him. But she doesn't find him, not when it matters anyway. Instead they "reunite" at a Christmas party, when her best friend Sarah giddily introduces her new boyfriend to Laurie. It's Jack, the man from the bus.



***The Orphan Collector* by Ellen Marie Wiseman**

In the fall of 1918, thirteen-year-old German immigrant Pia Lange longs to be far from Philadelphia's overcrowded slums and the anti-immigrant sentiment that compelled her father to enlist in the U.S. Army. But as her city celebrates the end of war, an even more urgent threat arrives: the Spanish flu. When food runs out in the cramped tenement she calls home, Pia must venture alone into the quarantined city in search of supplies, leaving her baby brothers behind. Bernice Groves has become lost in grief and bitterness since her baby died from the Spanish flu. Watching Pia leave her brothers alone, Bernice makes a shocking, life-altering decision. It becomes her sinister mission to tear families apart when they're at their most vulnerable, planning to transform the city's orphans and immigrant children into what she feels are "true Americans."



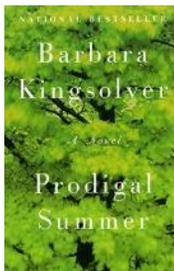
***The Paris Hours* by Alex George**

The Paris Hours explores, in the course of a single day, the loves, sorrows, and secrets of four ordinary people whose lives touch lightly on the more famous of 1920s Paris: Ernest Hemingway, Marcel Proust, Gertrude Stein, and Josephine Baker.



***A Place for Us* by Fatima Farheen Mirza**

A story of family identity and belonging follows an Indian family through the marriage of their daughter, from the parents' arrival in the United States to the return of their estranged son.



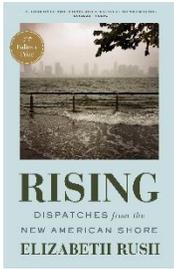
***Prodigal Summer* by Barbara Kingsolver**

Wildlife biologist Deanna is caught off guard by an intrusive young hunter, while bookish city wife Lusa finds herself facing a difficult identity choice, and elderly neighbors find attraction at the height of a long-standing feud.



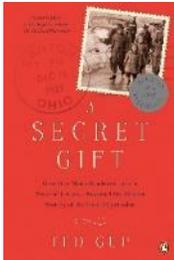
***The Red Tent* by Anita Diamant**

The story of Dinah, the daughter of Jacob, is told from her point of view, beginning with the story of her mothers, Leah, Rachel, Zilpah, and Bilhah. These wives of Jacob give her the gifts that are to sustain her through a damaged youth, a calling to midwifery, and a new home in a foreign land.



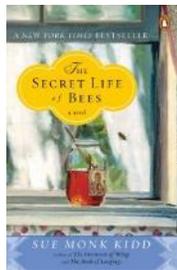
***Rising: Dispatches from the New American Shore* by Elizabeth Rush**

The early twenty-first century can be described as a time of unprecedented and catastrophic weather events, a time when it is increasingly clear that climate change is neither imagined nor distant - and that rising seas are transforming the coastline of the United States in irrevocable ways. The author explores some of the places where this change has been most dramatic, from the Gulf Coast to Miami, and from New York City to the Bay Area.



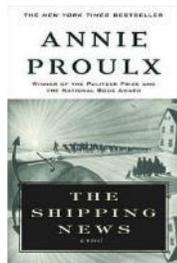
***A Secret Gift: How One Man's Kindness—and a Trove of Letters—revealed the Hidden History of the Great Depression* by Ted Gup**

The author's grandfather, Sam Stone, placed an ad in the Canton, OH, newspaper shortly before Christmas in 1933, offering cash gifts to seventy-five families in distress. Readers were asked to send letters describing their hardships to a benefactor calling himself Mr. B. Virdot. The author investigates a suitcase full of letters responding to these ads as he learns more about his grandfather's hidden past as well as the suffering and triumphs of strangers during the Great Depression.



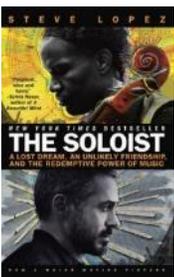
***The Secret Life of Bees* by Sue Monk Kidd**

Set in South Carolina in 1964, *The Secret Life of Bees* tells the story of Lily Owens, whose life has been shaped around the blurred memory of the afternoon her mother was killed. When Lily's fierce-hearted "stand-in mother," Rosaleen, insults three of the town's fiercest racists, Lily decides they should both escape to Tiburon, South Carolina—a town that holds the secret to her mother's past. There they are taken in by an eccentric trio of black beekeeping sisters who introduce Lily to a mesmerizing world of bees, honey, and the Black Madonna who presides over their household. This is a remarkable story about divine female power and the transforming power of love.



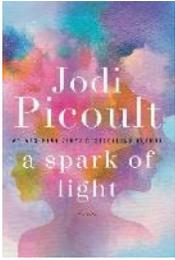
***The Shipping News* by Annie Proulx**

Newspaperman Quoyale decides to move to a tiny fishing town, Quoyale's Point, Capsize Cove, in Newfoundland, his ancestral home, after his adulterous wife is killed in a car accident.



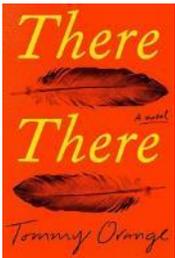
***The Soloist: A Lost Dream, an Unlikely Friendship, and the Redemptive Power of Music* by Steve Lopez**

The true story of Nathaniel Ayers, a musician who becomes schizophrenic and homeless, and his friendship with Steve Lopez, the Los Angeles columnist who discovers and writes about him in the newspaper.



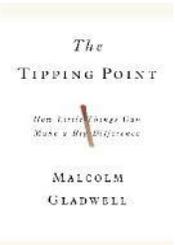
***A Spark of Light* by Jodi Picoult**

The warm fall day starts like any other at the Center--a women's reproductive health services clinic--its staff offering care to anyone who passes through its doors. Then, in late morning, a desperate and distraught gunman bursts in and opens fire, taking all inside hostage. After rushing to the scene, Hugh McElroy, a police hostage negotiator, sets up a perimeter and begins making a plan to communicate with the gunman. As his phone vibrates with incoming text messages he glances at it and, to his horror, finds out that his fifteen-year-old daughter, Wren, is inside the clinic.



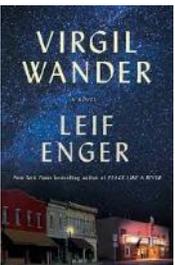
***There There* by Tommy Orange**

Jacque Red Feather is newly sober and trying to make it back to the family she left behind in shame in Oakland. Dene Oxedrene is pulling his life together after his uncle's death and has come to work the powwow and to honor his uncle's memory. Edwin Frank has come to find his true father. Bobby Big Medicine has come to drum the Grand Entry. Opal Viola Victoria Bear Shield has come to watch her nephew Orvil Red Feather; Orvil has taught himself Indian dance through YouTube videos, and he has come to the Big Oakland Powwow to dance in public for the very first time. Tony Loneman is a young Native American boy whose future seems destined to be as bleak as his past, and he has come to the Powwow with darker intentions--intentions that will destroy the lives of everyone in his path.



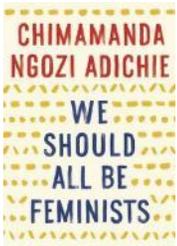
***The Tipping Point* by Malcolm Gladwell**

New Yorker writer Malcolm Gladwell looks at why major changes in our society so often happen suddenly and unexpectedly. Ideas, behavior, messages, and products, he argues, often spread like outbreaks of infectious disease. These are social epidemics, and the moment when they take off, when they reach their critical mass, is the Tipping Point.



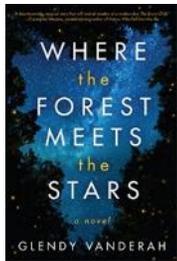
***Virgil Wander* by Leif Enger**

Midwestern movie house owner Virgil Wander is "cruising along at medium altitude" when his car flies off the road into icy Lake Superior. Virgil survives but his language and memory are altered and he emerges into a world no longer familiar to him. Awakening in this new life, Virgil begins to piece together his personal history and the lore of his broken town, with the help of a cast of affable and curious locals-- from Rune, a twinkling, pipe-smoking, kite-flying stranger investigating the mystery of his disappeared son; to Nadine, the reserved, enchanting wife of the vanished man, to Tom, a journalist and Virgil's oldest friend; and various members of the Pea family who must confront tragedies of their own.



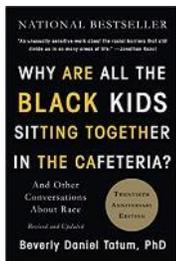
We Should All Be Feminists by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie

In this essay -- adapted from her TEDx talk of the same name -- Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, award-winning author of *Americanah*, offers readers a unique definition of feminism for the twenty-first century, one rooted in inclusion and awareness. Drawing extensively on her own experiences and her understanding of the often masked realities of sexual politics, here is one remarkable author's exploration of what it means to be a woman now -- and an of-the-moment rallying cry for why we should all be feminists.



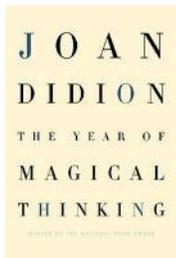
Where the Forest Meets the Stars by Glendy Vanderah

After the loss of her mother and her own battle with breast cancer, Joanna Teale returns to her graduate research on nesting birds in rural Illinois, determined to prove that her recent hardships have not broken her. When a mysterious child who shows up at her cabin, barefoot and covered in bruises, Joanna enlists the help of her reclusive neighbor, Gabriel Nash, to solve the mystery of the charming child. But the more time they spend together, the more questions they have.



Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria? by Beverly Daniel Tatum

The classic, bestselling book on the psychology of racism--now fully revised and updated. Walk into any racially mixed high school and you will see Black, White, and Latino youth clustered in their own groups. Is this self-segregation a problem to address or a coping strategy? Beverly Daniel Tatum, a renowned authority on the psychology of racism, argues that straight talk about our racial identities is essential if we are serious about enabling communication across racial and ethnic divides. These topics have only become more urgent as the national conversation about race is increasingly acrimonious.



The Year of Magical Thinking by Joan Didion

Several days before Christmas 2003, John Gregory Dunne and Joan Didion saw their only daughter, Quintana, fall ill with what seemed at first flu, then pneumonia, then complete septic shock. Days later - the night before New Year's Eve - the Dunes were just sitting down to dinner after visiting the hospital when John Gregory Dunne suffered a massive and fatal coronary. In a second, this close, symbiotic partnership of forty years was over. This ...book is Didion's attempt to make sense of the "weeks and then months that cut loose any fixed idea I ever had about death, about illness ...about marriage and children and memory ...about the shallowness of sanity, about life itself.

Note: All descriptions taken from <https://catalog.ills.org/polaris>