Skyline Book Club

2018

**January 8 In the Garden of Beasts by Erik Larson**

Best-selling author Larson (The Devil in the White City: Murder, Magic, and Madness at the Fair That Changed America) turns his considerable literary nonfiction skills to the experiences of U.S. ambassador to Germany William E. Dodd and his family in Berlin in the early years of Hitler's rule.

**February 12 A Man Called Ove by Fredrik Backman**

A feel-good story in the spirit of *The Unlikely Pilgrimage of Harold Fry* and *Major Pettigrew’s Last Stand*, Fredrik Backman’s novel about the angry old man next door is a thoughtful exploration of the profound impact one life has on countless others. “If there was an award for ‘Most Charming Book of the Year,’ this first novel by a Swedish blogger-turned-overnight-sensation would win hands down” (*Booklist*, starred review).

**March 12 Once and Future River: Reclaiming the Duwamish by Tom Reese**

Through photographs and words, *Once and Future River: Reclaiming the Duwamish* explores the complicated relationship between Seattleites and their only river. Central to the indigenous settlement that preceded the city, the Duwamish was critical to Seattle's founding and growth, but it has paid a steep price. Straightened, filled with trash and toxins, and generally neglected by those who benefited from it the most, the river was declared a Superfund site in 2001.

**April 9 A Gentleman in Moscow by Amor Towles**

In 1922, Count Alexander Rostov is deemed an unrepentant aristocrat by a Bolshevik tribunal, and 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 entry into a much larger world of emotional discovery. Brimming with humor, a glittering cast of characters, and one beautifully rendered scene after another, this singular novel casts a spell as it relates the count’s endeavor to gain a deeper understanding of what it means to be a man of purpose.

**May 14 King of Spies by Blaine Harden**

In 1946, master sergeant Donald Nichols was repairing jeeps on the sleepy island of Guam when he caught the eye of recruiters from the army's Counter Intelligence Corps. After just three months' training, he was sent to Korea, then a backwater beneath the radar of MacArthur's Pacific Command. Though he lacked the pedigree of most U.S. spies—Nichols was a 7th grade dropout—he quickly metamorphosed from army mechanic to black ops phenomenon. He insinuated himself into the affections of America’s chosen puppet in South Korea, President Syngman Rhee, and became a pivotal player in the Korean War, warning months in advance about the North Korean invasion, breaking enemy codes, and identifying most of the targets destroyed by  American bombs in North Korea.

**June 11 The Tragedy of Brady Sims by Ernest J. Gaines**

Ernest J. Gaines's new novella revolves around a courthouse shooting that leads a young reporter to uncover the long story of race and power in his small town and the relationship between the white sheriff and the black man who "whipped children" to keep order.

**July 9 Mountains beyond Mountains by Tracy Kidder**

The true story of a gifted man who loves the world and has set out to do all he can to cure it. In medical school, Paul Farmer found his life’s calling: to cure infectious diseases and to bring the lifesaving tools of modern medicine to those who need them most. Kidder’s magnificent account takes us from Harvard to Haiti, Peru, Cuba, and Russia as Farmer changes minds and practices through his dedication to the philosophy that “the only real nation is humanity.” At the heart of this book is the example of a life based on hope and on an understanding of the truth of the Haitian proverb “Beyond mountains there are mountains”–as you solve one problem, another problem presents itself, and so you go on and try to solve that one too.

**August 13 Americanah by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie**

Ifemelu and Obinze are young and in love when they depart military-ruled Nigeria for the West. Beautiful, self-assured Ifemelu heads for America, where despite her academic success, she is forced to grapple with what it means to be black for the first time. Quiet, thoughtful Obinze had hoped to join her, but with post-9/11 America closed to him, he instead plunges into a dangerous, undocumented life in London. Fifteen years later, they reunite in a newly democratic Nigeria, and reignite their passion—for each other and for their homeland.

**September 10 Dream Hoarders by Richard Reeves**

It is now conventional wisdom to focus on the wealth of the top 1 percent—especially the top 0.01 percent—and how the ultra-rich are concentrating income and prosperity while incomes for most other Americans are stagnant. But the most important, consequential, and widening gap in American society is between the upper middle class and everyone else.

**October 8 The People We Hate at the Wedding by Grant Ginder**

Paul and Alice’s half-sister Eloise is getting married! In London! There will be fancy hotels, dinners at “it” restaurants and a reception at a country estate complete with tea lights and embroidered cloth napkins. They couldn’t hate it more. s this estranged clan gathers together, and Eloise's walk down the aisle approaches, Grant Ginder brings to vivid, hilarious life the power of family, and the complicated ways we hate the ones we love the most in the most bitingly funny, slyly witty and surprisingly tender novel you’ll read this year.

**November 12 Rain by Cynthia Barnett**

Cynthia Barnett's *Rain*begins four billion years ago with the torrents that filled the oceans, and builds to the storms of climate change. It weaves together science—the true shape of a raindrop, the mysteries of frog and fish rains—with the human story of our ambition to control rain, from ancient rain dances to the 2,203 miles of levees that attempt to straitjacket the Mississippi River.It offers a glimpse of our "founding forecaster," Thomas Jefferson, who measured every drizzle long before modern meteorology. Two centuries later, rainy skies would help inspire Morrissey’s mopes and Kurt Cobain’s grunge. *Rain*is also a travelogue, taking readers to Scotland to tell the surprising story of the mackintosh raincoat, and to India, where villagers extract the scent of rain from the monsoon-drenched earth and turn it into perfume.

**December 10 The Turner House by Angela Flournoy**

For over fifty years the Turners have lived on Yarrow Street. Their house has seen thirteen children get grown and gone—and some return; it has seen the arrival of grandchildren, the fall of Detroit’s East Side, and the loss of a father. But when their powerful mother falls ill, the Turners are called home to decide their house’s fate and to reckon with how their past haunts—and shapes—their future. *The Turner House* is a striking examination of the price we pay for our dreams, and the ways in which our families bring us home.