

Emma S. Clark Memorial Library

Evening BOOK Discussion

2022-2023

The books are selected and facilitated by the participants. Copies of the next book will be available at the Circulation Desk to check out on your way to the Community Room. We meet 2nd Wednesday, from 7:30–8:45 p.m. in the Vincent R. O’Leary Community Room.

SEPTEMBER 14 Hamnet by Maggie O’Farrell (246 pp) **Pick up Aug. 17th**

In 1580s England, Agnes is known throughout the countryside for her unusual gifts as a healer, understanding plants and potions better than she does people. Once she settles with her husband in Stratford-upon-Avon, she becomes a fiercely protective mother and a steadfast force in the life of her young husband. His career on the London stage is taking off when their beloved young son succumbs to sudden fever. *Hamnet* is a re-imagining of a boy whose name was given to one of the most celebrated plays of all time.

OCTOBER 12 Born a Crime: Stories From a South African Childhood by Trevor Noah (288 pp / Memoir)

Noah tells his coming-of-age story with his larger-than-life mother, during the twilight of apartheid-era South Africa. Noah was born illegal--the son of a white, Dutch father and a black Xhosa mother. His brilliantly eccentric mother loomed over his life and was the parent who set Noah on his bumpy path to stardom. Noah’s stories are sometimes dark, or bizarre, frequently tender, and always hilarious.

NOVEMBER 9 Sag Harbor by Colson Whitehead (273 pp / Pool Book)

Benji Cooper is one of the few Black students at an elite prep school in Manhattan. But every summer, he escapes to the Hamptons, to Sag Harbor, where a small community of Black professionals have built a world of their own. The summer of ’85 won’t be without its usual trials and tribulations, of course. There will be complicated new handshakes to fumble through and state-of-the-art profanity to master. Benji will be tested by contests big and small, but maybe, just maybe, this summer might be one for the ages.

DECEMBER 14 Interpreter of Maladies: Stories by Jhumpa Lahiri (198 pp / Pool Book)

With accomplished precision and gentle eloquence, Jhumpa Lahiri traces the crosscurrents set in motion when immigrants, expatriates, and their children arrive, quite literally, at a cultural divide. Imbued with the sensual details of Indian culture, these stories speak with passion and wisdom to everyone who has ever felt like a foreigner.

JANUARY 11 The Overstory by Richard Powers (512 pp)

The Overstory, which falls in the genre of nature fiction, unfolds in concentric rings of interlocking fables that range from antebellum New York to the late twentieth-century Timber Wars of the Pacific Northwest, and beyond. Nine people are each summoned in different ways by trees, and are brought together to save the continent’s few remaining acres of virgin forest.

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FEBRUARY 8 All that She Carried: The Journey of Ashley’s Sack, A Black Family Keepsake by Tiya Alicia Miles (385 pp / Nonfiction)

On display at the Smithsonian’s National Museum of African American History and Culture, is a rough cotton bag called “Ashley’s Sack,” embroidered with just a handful of words that evoke a sweeping family story of loss and of love passed down through generations. In 1850s South Carolina, just before nine-year-old Ashley was sold, her mother, Rose, gave her a sack filled with just a few things as a token of her love. Historian Tiya Miles carefully follows faint archival traces back to Charleston. She then follows the paths of their lives to write a unique, innovative history of the lived experience of slavery in the United States.

MARCH 8 Prague Winter by Madeleine Albright (467 pp / Memoir / Pool Book)

From former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright comes a moving and thoughtful memoir of her formative years in Czechoslovakia during the tumult of Nazi occupation, World War II, fascism, and the onset of the Cold War. An intensely personal journey into the past that offers vital lessons for the future, Prague Winter combines the intimacy of an autobiography with the drama of an exciting and well-told story—all underpinned by the gravity and intelligence of a serious work of history.

APRIL 12 The Personal Librarian by Marie Benedict (341 pp)

In her twenties, Belle da Costa Greene is hired by J. P. Morgan to curate a collection of rare manuscripts, books, and artwork for his newly built Pierpont Morgan Library. Belle becomes a fixture in New York City society and one of the most powerful people in the art and book world, known for her impeccable taste and shrewd negotiating for critical works, as she helps create a world-class collection. But Belle has a secret, one she must protect at all costs...

MAY 10 Manhattan Beach by Jennifer Egan (438 pp)

Anna Kerrigan, nearly twelve years old, accompanies her father to the house of a man, who she gleans is crucial to the survival of her father and her family. Years later, her father has disappeared and the country is at war. Anna works at the Brooklyn Navy Yard, where women are allowed to hold jobs that had always belonged to men. At a night club, she chances to meet the man she visited with her father before he vanished, and she begins to understand the complexity of her father’s life.

JUNE 14 The Storied Life Of A.J. Fikry by Gabrielle Zevin (270 pp / Pool Book)

With his wife gone, a rare book stolen, and both his bookstore and love of life in serious decline, only something extraordinary could alter the sagging fortunes of A. J. Fikry and Island Books. What he discovers one night among the children’s books, however, could change everything.



Emma S. Clark
Memorial Library

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Please let us know in advance if you will need an accommodation in order to make this event accessible to you. Pictures taken at library events or activities may be posted online, printed in our newsletter or displayed in-house. If you do not want yourself and/or your minor child photographed, please notify the photographer covering the event.