

Armchair Travel Book Club Selection List

Brookfield Public Library 2016-2017

All sessions are held on the 3rd Tuesday of the month.

We try to have enough books available for everyone in the discussion group by requesting them from other libraries. Under ideal circumstances, the books are available one month in advance of the meeting date from the Circulation Desk. The additional copies will not be displayed in our online catalog! Just ask at the check-out desk for the next available book discussion title. Please ask them to check the item out to you through the date of the discussion.

August 16, 2016 10:00 a.m. Rotary Club Room Italy
Four Seasons in Rome: On Twins, Insomnia, and the Biggest Funeral in the History of the World by Anthony Doerr

Anthony Doerr learned he won the Rome Prize, which comes with a stipend and a writing studio in Rome for a year, the day he and his wife returned from the hospital with newborn twins. This intimate and revelatory book is a celebration of Rome, a wondrous look at new parenthood, and a fascinating story of a writer's craft—the process by which he transforms what he sees and experiences into sentences (Amazon).

September 20, 2016 10:00 a.m. Rotary Club Room India
Beneath a Marble Sky: A Novel of the Taj Mahal by John Shors

In 1632, the Emperor of Hindustan, Shah Jahan, overwhelmed with grief over the death of his beloved wife, Mumatz Mahal, commissioned the building of a grand mausoleum to symbolize the greatness of their love. This historical fiction title centers on the building of the Taj Mahal but also highlights vast differences in class and religion. Narrated by Princess Jahanara, the eldest daughter, this story recounts her parents' story as well as her own, a parallel tale of forbidden love (Amazon).

October 18, 2016 10:00 a.m. Rotary Club Room North & South America
1491: New Revelations of the Americas Before Columbus by Charles C. Mann

In the last 20 years, archaeologists and anthropologists, equipped with new scientific techniques, have made far-reaching discoveries about the Americas. For example, Indians did not cross the Bering Strait 12,000 years ago; they were already here. And instead of living lightly on the land, they managed it beautifully and left behind an enormous ecological legacy. In this riveting, accessible work of science, the author takes us on an enthralling journey of scientific exploration (Polaris summary).

November 15, 2016 10:00 a.m. Rotary Club Room South Korea
This Burns My Heart by Samuel Park

On the eve of marriage to her weak, timid fiancé, Soo-Ja falls in love with a young medical student. But out of duty to her family and her culture she turns him away, choosing instead a world that leaves her trapped by suffocating customs. In this work of fiction, taking place in 1960's Korea, a country torn between past and present, Soo-Ja struggles to find happiness in a loveless marriage and strives to carve out a successful future for her only daughter (Amazon).

No Meeting in December

January 17, 2017 10:00 a.m. Rotary Club Room China
Wild Swans: Three Daughters of China by Jung Chang

An engrossing record of Mao's impact on China, an unusual window on the female experience in the modern world, and an inspiring tale of courage and love, Jung Chang describes the extraordinary lives and experiences of her family members: her grandmother, a warlord's concubine; her mother's struggles as a young idealistic Communist; and that of her own life. As the story of each generation unfolds, Chang captures in gripping, moving detail the cycles of violent drama visited on her own family and millions of others caught in the whirlwind of history (Amazon).

February 21, 2017 10:00 a.m. Rotary Club Room Various
The Geography of Bliss: One Grump's Search for the Happiest Places in the World by Eric Weiner

Part foreign affairs discourse, part humor, and part twisted self-help guide, *The Geography of Bliss* takes the reader from America to Iceland to India in search of happiness, or, in the crabby author's case, moments of "un-unhappiness." The book uses a beguiling mixture of travel, psychology, science and humor to investigate not what happiness is, but where it is and in the process, offers travelers of all moods some interesting new ideas for sunnier destinations and dispositions (publisher description).

March 21, 2017 10:00 a.m. Rotary Club Room New York, USA
The Manor: Three Centuries at a Slave Plantation on Long Island by Mac Griswold

In 1984, the landscape historian Mac Griswold was rowing along a Long Island creek when she came upon Sylvester Manor. Based on years of research, the author has given us both the biography of a place that has witnessed war and reversals in fortune, and the riveting story of the family that has occupied it for three centuries. A fine-grained account and a sweeping drama, *The Manor* captures American history in all its richness and contradictions (Amazon).

April 18, 2017 10:00 a.m. Rotary Club Room Mississippi, USA
Dispatches From Pluto: Lost and Found in the Mississippi Delta by Richard Grant

Richard Grant and his girlfriend were living in a shoebox apartment in New York City when they decided on a whim to buy an old plantation house in the Mississippi Delta. *Dispatches from Pluto* is their journey of discovery into this strange and wonderful American place. Soon, Grant and his girlfriend battle fire ants and cottonmouths in the garden, shoot deer for food, and get used to driving over 50 miles to the nearest Walmart (Library Journal).

May 16, 2017 10:00 a.m. Rotary Club Room England
Secret Rooms: A True Story of a Haunted Castle, a Plotting Duchess & a Family Secret
 by Catherine Bailey

After the Ninth Duke of Rutland, one of the wealthiest men in Britain, died alone in a cramped room in the servants' quarters of Belvoir Castle on April 21, 1940, his son and heir ordered the room, which contained the Rutland family archives, sealed. Sixty years later, Catherine Bailey became the first historian given access. As Bailey uncovers the answers, she also provides an intimate portrait of the very top of British society in the turbulent days leading up to World War II (Polaris summary).

June 20, 2017 10:00 a.m. Community Room
Selection Meeting for 2017-2018 season.