

July 2018

"Great Lives" Biography Book Group Brookfield Public Library 2018-19

Books are available at the Circulation Desk about a month before the meeting. Anyone interested in reading and discussing biographies is welcome!

Monday, August 27, 2018 **1:00pm** **Harnischfeger Room**

***The Astronaut Wives Club* by Lily Koppel**

As America's Mercury Seven astronauts were launched on death-defying missions, television cameras focused on the brave smiles of their young wives. Overnight, these women were transformed from military spouses into American royalty. Together with the other wives they formed the Astronaut Wives Club, meeting regularly to provide support and friendship. Many became next-door neighbors and helped to raise each other's children by day, while going to glam parties at night. As their celebrity rose-and as divorce and tragic death began to touch their lives-they continued to rally together, and the wives have now been friends for more than fifty years. *Provided by publisher.*

Monday, September 24, 2018 **1:00pm** **Harnischfeger Room**

***Mrs. Lincoln and Mrs. Keckley* by Jennifer Fleischner**

A vibrant social history set against the backdrop of the Antebellum south and the Civil War that recreates the lives and friendship of two exceptional women: First Lady Mary Todd Lincoln and her mulatto dressmaker, Elizabeth Keckly. *Amazon.com.*

Monday, October 22, 2018 **1:00pm** **Harnischfeger Room**

***Bobby Kennedy: a Raging Spirit* by Chris Matthews**

Overlooked by his father, and overshadowed by his war-hero brother, Bobby Kennedy was the perpetual underdog. RFK would prove himself to be the rarest of politicians--both a pragmatist who knew how to get the job done and an unwavering idealist who could inspire millions. Drawing on extensive research and interviews, Matthews pulls back the curtain on the public and private worlds of Kennedy. He shines a light on all the important moments of his life, from his early years and his start in politics to his crucial role as attorney general in his brother's administration and his tragic run for president. *Amazon.com.*

Monday, November 26, 2018 **1:00pm** **Harnischfeger Room**

***Heart Berries: a Memoir* by Terese Mailhot**

Having survived a profoundly dysfunctional upbringing only to find herself hospitalized and facing a dual diagnosis of post-traumatic stress disorder and bipolar II disorder, Terese Marie Mailhot is given a notebook and begins to write her way out of trauma. The triumphant result is this book: a memorial for Mailhot's mother, a social worker and activist who had a thing for prisoners; a story of reconciliation with her father--an abusive drunk and a brilliant artist--who was murdered under mysterious circumstances; and an elegy on how difficult it is to love someone while dragging the long shadows of shame. A powerful, poetic memoir of a woman's coming of age on the Seabird Island Indian Reservation in the Pacific Northwest. *Provided by publisher.*

December NO MEETING

Monday, January 28, 2019 **1:00pm** **Harnischfeger Room**

***First Women: the Grace and Power of America's Modern First Ladies* by Kate Andersen Brower**

One of the most underestimated—and challenging—positions in the world, the First Lady of the United States must be many things: an inspiring leader with a forward-thinking agenda of her own; a savvy politician, skilled at navigating the treacherous rapids of Washington; a wife and mother operating under constant scrutiny; and an able CEO responsible for the smooth operation of countless services and special events at the White House. Former White House correspondent Kate Andersen Brower draws on a wide array of untapped, candid sources—from residence staff and social secretaries to friends and political advisers—to tell the stories of the ten remarkable women who have defined that role since 1960. *Polaris.*

July 2018

Monday, February 25, 2019

1:00pm

Harnischfeger Room

***Hillbilly Elegy: a Memoir of a Family and Culture in Crisis* by J.D. Vance**

Hillbilly Elegy is a passionate and personal analysis of a culture in crisis—that of white working-class Americans. J. D. Vance tells the true story of what a social, regional, and class decline feels like when you were born with it hung around your neck. The Vance family story begins hopefully, but as the family saga plays out, we learn that this is only the short, superficial version. Vance's grandparents, aunt, uncle, sister, and, most of all, his mother, struggled profoundly with the demands of their new middle-class life, and were never able to fully escape the legacy of abuse, alcoholism, poverty, and trauma so characteristic of their part of America. *Polaris*.

Monday, March 25, 2019

1:00pm

Harnischfeger Room

***The Girl with Seven Names: a North Korean Defector's Story* by Hyeonseo Lee**

As a child growing up in North Korea, Hyeonseo Lee was one of millions trapped by a secretive and brutal communist regime. Her home on the border with China gave her some exposure to the world beyond the confines of the Hermit Kingdom and, as the famine of the 1990s struck, she began to wonder, question and to realize that she had been brainwashed her entire life. Aged seventeen, she decided to escape North Korea. Twelve years and two lifetimes later, she would return to the North Korean border in a daring mission to spirit her mother and brother to South Korea, on one of the most arduous, costly and dangerous journeys imaginable. Strong, brave and eloquent, this memoir is a triumph of her remarkable spirit. *Polaris*.

Monday, April 22, 2019

1:00pm

Harnischfeger Room

***The Line Becomes a River* by Francisco Cantu**

For Francisco Cantú, the border is in the blood: his mother, a park ranger and daughter of a Mexican immigrant, raised him in the scrublands of the Southwest. Haunted by the landscape of his youth, Cantú joins the Border Patrol. He and his partners are posted to remote regions crisscrossed by drug routes and smuggling corridors, where they learn to track other humans under blistering sun and through frigid nights. They haul in the dead and deliver to detention those they find alive. Cantú tries not to think where the stories go from there. Plagued by nightmares, he abandons the Patrol for civilian life. But when an immigrant friend travels to Mexico to visit his dying mother and does not return, Cantú discovers that the border has migrated with him, and now he must know the whole story. *Provided by publisher*.

*****Date change because of Memorial Day*****

Monday, June 3, 2019

1:00pm

Harnischfeger Room

***Louisa: the Extraordinary Life of Mrs. Adams* by Louisa Thomas**

Born in London to an American father and a British mother on the eve of the Revolutionary War, Louisa Catherine Johnson was raised in circumstances very different from the New England upbringing of the future president John Quincy Adams, whose life had been dedicated to public service from the earliest age. And yet John Quincy fell in love with her, almost despite himself. Their often tempestuous but deeply close marriage lasted half a century. Louisa saw more of Europe and America than nearly any other woman of her time. But wherever she lived, she was always pressing her nose against the glass, not quite sure whether she was looking in or out. The story of Louisa Catherine Adams is one of a woman who forged a sense of self. *Polaris*.

Monday, June 24, 2019

1:00pm

Harnischfeger Room

Selection Meeting for the 2019-2020 season. Cast your votes!

Monday, July 22, 2019

1:00pm

Harnischfeger Room

***The Stowaway: a Young Man's Extraordinary Adventure to Antarctica* by Laurie Shapiro**

It was 1928: a time of illicit booze, of Gatsby and Babe Ruth, of freewheeling fun. The Great War was over and American optimism was higher than the stock market. What better moment to launch an expedition to Antarctica, the planet's final frontier? The night before the expedition's flagship launched, Billy Gawronski--a skinny, first generation New York City high schooler desperate to escape a dreary future in the family upholstery business--jumped into the Hudson River and snuck aboard. Could he get away with it? *Polaris*.