



BOOK CLUB BOOKS

Below are this winter's Book Club selections. Chosen to represent a range of interests, it is hoped these books will stimulate thought and discussion among our diverse group of readers. As always, your comments and suggestions are welcome.

FALL 2016

Alexander Hamilton by Ron Chernow

Few figures in American history have been more controversial and misunderstood than Hamilton. Pulitzer Prize winning author Chernow sets the record straight, deftly illustrating that the political and economic greatness of today's America is partly a result of Hamilton's countless sacrifices to champion ideas that were often disputed during his time. He tells the riveting story of a man who overcame many challenges in order to shape, inspire, and scandalize the newborn America. This biography is the inspiration for the current wildly popular musical, *Hamilton*. (nonfiction)

The Automobile Club of Egypt by Alaa Al Aswany

Once a respected landowner, Abd el-Aziz Gaafar lost everything and had to move his family to Cairo, where he found menial work at the Automobile Club—a refuge of colonial luxury for Europeans. From the most popular Egyptian novelist of his generation, an exuberant and powerfully moving story of a family swept up by social unrest in post-World War II Egypt. (fiction)

Black Flags: The Rise of ISIS by Joby Warrick

When Jordan granted amnesty to a group of political prisoners in 1999, it little realized that among them was Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, a terrorist mastermind and soon the architect of an Islamist movement bent on dominating the Middle East. In this character-driven, thrilling and dramatic account, reporter Joby Warrick traces how the strain of militant Islam behind ISIS first arose in a remote Jordanian prison and spread with the unwitting aid of two American presidents. Winner of the Pulitzer Prize. (nonfiction)

The Expatriates by Janice Lee

Lee explores the emotions, identities, and relationships of three very different American women living in the same small expat community in Hong Kong. As each woman struggles with her own demons, their lives collide in ways that have irreversible consequences for them all. With keen observations of women's inner lives, the story is atmospheric and utterly compelling. (fiction)

The Prize: Who's in Charge of America's Schools? By Dale Russakoff

When Mark Zuckerberg announced his \$100 million pledge to transform the downtrodden schools of Newark, then-mayor Cory Booker and Governor Chris Christie were beside him, vowing to help. But their plans soon ran afoul of the city's seasoned education players, protectors of their billion-dollar-a-year system. Russakoff has written a riveting drama for our times, highlighting the rise of celebrity politics, big philanthropy, extreme economic inequality, the charter school movement, and the struggles of the nation's poorest cities. (nonfiction)

The Tsar of Love and Techno by Anthony Marra

Interwoven stories about family, sacrifice, the legacy of war, and the redemptive power of art. This collection introduces a cast of remarkable characters whose lives intersect in ways both life-affirming and

heartbreaking. A 1930s Soviet censor painstakingly corrects offending photographs while mesmerized by the image of a disgraced prima ballerina, a chorus of women recount their stories and those of their grandmothers, former gulag prisoners, while in another story people are caught in an oil landscape unremarkable except for the obliteration of the peaceful past it once had been. (fiction)

Twain & Stanley Enter Paradise by Oscar Hijuelos

Pulitzer Prize-winning author Oscar Hijuelos was inspired by the 37-year friendship between two towering figures of the late nineteenth century, famed writer and humorist Mark Twain and legendary explorer Sir Henry Morton Stanley. From their early days as journalists in the American West, to their admiration and support of each other's writing, their mutual hatred of slavery, their social life together in the dazzling literary circles of the period, and their venture to Cuba to find a long-lost father, this historical novel superbly channels two vibrant but very different real-life figures. (fiction)



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