

Book Club Books, Winter 2001

Below are winter additions to this year's Book Club selections. We hope our readers will find these diverse selections stimulating and enjoyable. As always, your comments and suggestions are welcome.

AHAB'S WIFE by Sena Jeter Naslund

"This narrative, written in Una's voice, captures the exciting and pivotal times of mid-nineteenth-century New England, reflecting the pressing issues of the day, such as slavery, the position of women, and the influence of religion. It is part adventure, part love story, brimming with references to literature..." Booklist, August 1999.

THE FISH CAN SING by Halldor Laxness

Laxness won the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1955 and this is one of his finest novels. Several narrative strands come together in an orphan's coming-of-age story, a tragic tale of a renowned singer, and a wonderfully evocative portrait of Reykjavik at the beginning of the twentieth century, poised between quaint old customs and modern times.

GALILEO'S DAUGHTER by Dava Sobel

"The daughter of the title was Virginia, the eldest of Galileo's three children. She spent her adult life in a convent... From there she carried on a lifelong correspondence with her father - dotting, supportive, stylish letters. Science writer Sobel...translated them and made them the basis of this lucid review of Galileo's life and scientific achievements." Scientific American, January 2000.

GIRL IN HYACINTH BLUE by Susan Vreeland

"Each chapter reveals a new layer of meaning and import. The novel follows the trail of an "unknown" painting by the Dutch master Vermeer...from the time of its creation in seventeenth-century Holland to the present day....True to the spirit of Vermeer, Vreeland uses art as a vehicle for capturing special moments in the lives of ordinary people." Booklist, September 1, 1999.

MOTHERLESS BROOKLYN by Jonathan Lethem.

"Tourette's syndrome sleuth...Lionel Essrog....is seeking nothing, not the mother who left him ...until his boss, his savior and protector, mobster/detective Frank Minna is murdered while investigating a case. Lionel devotes himself to tracking down the murderer. What a wild Coney Island Cyclone ride of a chase it is!" Library Journal, February 1, 2000.

PLAINSONG by Kent Haruf

"A stirring meditation on the true nature and necessity of the family. Among the several damaged families in this beautifully cadenced and understated tale is that of Tom Guthrie, a high-school history teacher in small Holt, Colorado, who's left to raise his two young sons, Ike and Bobby,

alone when his troubled wife...abandons them altogether.” Kirkus Reviews, August 15, 1999.