

Historical

Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Celebration



Do you have Martin Luther King Jr. Day off of school? Spend this January 15th at the Main Library for a day ON as we celebrate the birthday of the American Civil Rights icon. [Read more](#)
Posted by Lizzie F. on January 2, 2018

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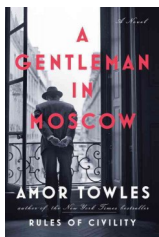
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A Gentleman in Moscow



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During the first half of the twentieth century, thousands of Russians suffered fates much worse than life-long imprisonment. Joseph Stalin sent many artists, writers, and politicians to the Gulag?or killed them outright.

This is the fictional story of Count Rostov, an educated aristocrat devoted to the literary arts, who found after the first Russian Revolution that being a count was not only illegal, but dangerous. The Count traveled to Paris, and unlike many of his contemporaries visiting abroad, decided to return home. But in the 1920s, under Stalin's Article 58 banning counterrevolution, Rostov stood before a tribunal, and was sentenced to permanent imprisonment at the luxury Metropol Hotel for writing a poem that he never wrote. [Read more](#)

Posted by Dory L. on July 19, 2017

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A Fall of Marigolds



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This beautiful novel weaves together two stories from vastly different time periods. One is that of modern Taryn, a single Mom, who works at a high-end fabric store in Manhattan that specializes in matching rare fabrics. The other is Clara's story about working as a nurse with infectious disease patients on Ellis Island in 1911.

Both women have experienced deep tragedies. Taryn lost her husband in the World Trade Bombings of 2001. A special fabric assignment made her late to a Windows on the World restaurant breakfast with her husband who worked in one of the towers. He died. She survived, thanks to a the scarf that is featured in the title, a beautiful scarf more than a hundred years old that Clara also wore on Ellis Island.

Throughout her life Clara had been spunky. As a teenager she helped her dad in his doctor's office and unlike her mother and sister, could handle even the bloodiest patrons, and the most horrific sick room scenes. Unlike many young women of her time, she traveled far from home for a job, first working in Manhattan for the Triangle Shirtwaist Company. [Read more](#)

Posted by Dory L. on February 29, 2016

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Glory



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Civil War Colonel Robert Gould Shaw of the Union Army is not a man most of us would think of as having an important role in the history of African Americans in the United States, but he did. Col. Shaw was chosen to lead the Massachusetts 54th Regiment of the Union Army. With the exception of himself and his second in command this regiment was made up entirely of African Americans and was one of the first to actually be allowed to carry arms into battle. [Read more](#)

Posted by Keith C. on February 3, 2016

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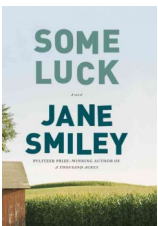
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Some Luck



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Before this century, farming was a way of life for many Americans. In the 1920s, 20% of our workforce labored on farms. Now it is less than 2%. This novel, the first of a trilogy, covers the lives of an extended agricultural family, the Langdons, from the 1920s to the 1950s.

In 1920 Walter Langdon, a young 25-year-old walks the land of his new farm. His father thought he didn't need to start on his own yet, but Walter disagreed. He had a wife after all--the beautiful and practical, Rosanna--and now a six-month-old son, the treasured Frank. As the first grandchild in the family, he receives tons of love and praise.

The novel covers a cycle of births, deaths, marriages, and children coming of age for two generations. The pace is slow, the characterization, deep, and you feel that you are really experiencing life as it was lived on an Iowa farm. [Read more](#)

Posted by Dory L. on September 22, 2015

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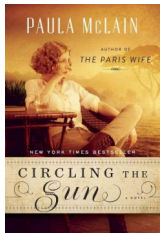
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Circling the Sun



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Miwanzo is the Swahili word for "beginnings." In this fascinating fictional biography, this word could stand for so many things: Beryl Clutterbuck's family arriving in Africa from England when she was a child of four; the young girl establishing a close emotional bond with the local native families, known as Kipsigis; the first time she trained a thoroughbred on her own; and the first time she piloted a plane.

What an exciting life Beryl led. Beryl was one of those women who pushed against the boundaries of convention to fully partake in life.

She became the first female licensed racehorse trainer in Africa and the horses under her care won many races. She became an early bush pilot in Africa and the first woman aviator to fly across the Atlantic from east to west. [Read more](#)

Posted by Dory L. on July 16, 2015

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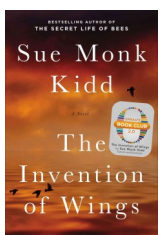
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The Invention of Wings



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Two young women characters guide the reader back to 19th century South Carolina where the institution of slavery affected everyone's life and relationships. Hetty (nicknamed Handful) is a skinny wisp of a girl with amber eyes and wild braids in her hair.

At the age of ten, the Missus gives her to her middle child, Sarah, who has just moved up from the nursery. In this society it's normal to have your own slave, and one who can mend and sew is highly valued.

At an elegant birthday party attended by the privileged young of Charleston society, Sarah refuses this lady's maid/slave. Sarah does not believe in the institution although her family's life centers around its abuse and brutality. The Missus walks everywhere with a cane, but the slaves know its real use?to hit them on the head should they bring this lady displeasure. [Read more](#)

Posted by Dory L. on January 7, 2015

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Monuments Men



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It's not often that a World War II film comes my way that stirs my soul. It's even rarer that what stirs my soul is not the personal story of an individual or a small group of people standing up for what is right against the Nazi's or an escape from a German internment camp despite impossible odds. It's not that I don't enjoy a good war film, but most war films have the same basic features, [Read more](#)

Posted by Keith C. on December 26, 2014

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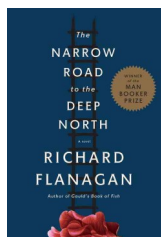
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Man Booker Prize Awarded to Australian Novelist



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The Man Booker Prize winner for 2014 was announced on Tuesday. Richard Flanagan, a popular and highly-regarded Australian novelist, won it for his book *The Narrow Road to the Deep North*, a historical novel set during WWII.

It's about the construction of the Thai-Burma railroad, known as the Death Railway. For an odd bit of symmetry, Flanagan's father, who worked on this railway during World War II, died on the very day that Flanagan finished his book.

If you follow book news, you already know that this is the first year that American authors have been allowed to compete for the Booker, and two Americans made the short list: Karen Joy Fowler (*We Are All Completely Beside Ourselves*) and Joshua Ferris (*To Rise Again at a Decent Hour*). [Read more](#)

Posted by Dory L. on October 16, 2014

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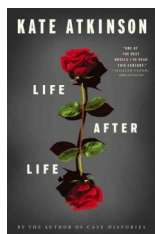
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Booksplus Discussion, Sunday June 1: Life After Life by Kate Atkinson



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In the first hundred pages of this novel, Ursula Todd, its heroine, lives and dies at least six times. Once she dies in childbirth, another time she falls off her own roof, having chased a sibling's favorite toy, and a third time she dies of influenza. This alternative history novel, although innovative in form, is rich in storytelling particularly about life at the beginning of the last century and during World Wars I and II. Ursula's intelligent and perceptive take upon the world makes

captivating reading.

New York Times reviewer, Janet Maslin, called *Life after Life* "a big book that defies logic, chronology and even history in ways that underscore its author's fully untethered imagination." *Publishers Weekly* described the book this way, "through Ursula's many lives and the accretion of what T.S. Eliot called visions and revisions, she's found an inventive way to make both the war's toll and the pull of alternate history, of darkness avoided or diminished, fresh. Atkinson is not afraid to take risks including using Adolph Hitler as a walk-on character in this book?in fact he's responsible for one of Ursula's many deaths.

Please join us for a book talk about this intriguing book this Sunday, June 1st at 2pm. All are welcome. We will meet in Room 2B. For more information about this and future [Booksplus](#) programs, please follow the link.

Posted by Dory L. on May 28, 2014

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