Spotlight on Non-Fiction Book Club Reads

It’s that time of year when the Best Books of 2012 lists are published. Many of our book club choices are selected from the “Best of” fiction lists. However, I would like to highlight some of the Non-Fiction titles from the 2012 lists that could make for interesting discussions for your book club in 2013.

**Behind the Beautiful FOREVERS: Life, Death, and Hope in a Mumbai Undercity by Katherine Boo**  A first book by a Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist profiles everyday life in the settlement of Annawadi as experienced by a Muslim teen, an ambitious rural mother of a prospective female college student and a young scrap metal thief, in an account that illuminates how their efforts to build better lives are challenged by regional religious, caste and economic tensions.

**Wild: From Lost to Found on the Pacific Crest Trail by Cheryl Strayed**  A powerful, blazingly honest, inspiring memoir: the story of a 1,100 mile solo hike that broke down a young woman reeling from catastrophe—and built her back up again.

**The End of Your Life Book Club by Will Schwalbe**  Recounts how the author and his mother read and discussed books during her chemotherapy treatments, describing how the activity involved a wide range of literary genres, furthered their appreciation for literature, and strengthened their bond.

**Island of Vice: Theodore Roosevelt’s Doomed Quest to Clean Up Sin-Loving New York by Richard Zacks**  Recounts the effort by newly appointed police commissioner Theodore Roosevelt to shut down late nineteenth-century New York City’s brothels, gambling houses, and after-hours saloons.

**Thomas Jefferson: The Art of Power by Jon Meacham**  The Pulitzer Prize-winning author of American Lion presents a richly detailed portrait of the third President that considers his early life, roles as a Founding Father and considerable achievements as a master politician.

**No Easy Day: The Autobiography of a Navy SEAL by Mark Owen with Kevin Maurer**  Examines the mission that killed Osama Bin Laden, details the selection and training process for one of the most elite units in the military, and describes previously unreported missions that illustrate the life and work of a SEAL and the evolution of the team after the events of September 11.

-Evelyn Hershkowitz, Readers’ Services Librarian
Mitch Albom’s latest novel, *The Time Keeper* reads like a parable. Similar to his previous books *Tuesdays with Morrie* and *For One More Day*, *The Time Keeper* offers an inspiring tale that is not to be missed. Father Time, the inventor of the world’s first clock is punished for trying to measure God’s greatest gift: Time. Father Time is banished to a cave where he is forced to listen to thousands of individual voices begging for more time. Eventually he is granted his freedom and given a mission; he must teach two earthly people the true meaning of time. One is a teenage girl who is about to give up on life and the other is a wealthy businessman who wants to live forever.

*The Time Keeper* conveys Time as a constant one way movement. Time is depicted everywhere we turn from the clocks in our homes, cars, cell phones, computers and places of business. Especially during this time of year, “Time” seems to slip through our hands and flash before our eyes. We often ask “Where did the year go”? I found this book to be very inspirational. Mitch Albom allows the reader to ask themselves “How do I spend my time”? And “Do I truly appreciate how precious Time is”? This book would make a great book club pick as there is a lot to discuss. We currently have Mitch Albom’s *For One More Day* as a book club in a bag. *For One More Day* is the story of a mother and son which explores the question: What would you do if you could spend one more day with a lost loved one?

Warmest wishes for a very Happy Healthy 2013 filled with “Time” to enjoy the small moments life has to offer. –Lisa Jones, Readers’ Services Librarian

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**POWERFUL MESSAGE IN MITCH ALBOM’S LATEST NOVEL THE TIME_keeper**

HAVE A NEW YEAR’S Resolution Book Club Meeting...

It’s January!!! You know what that means: time for a New Year’s resolution. Help your book club members make and keep their New Year’s resolutions this year by choosing a self-help book to discuss at your next meeting. Start the year off right. Do something different instead of your typical historical or cultural fiction choice. Some interesting choices for discussion include:

- **The Happiness Project: Or Why I Spent a Year Trying to Sing in the Morning, Clean My Closets, Fight Right, Read Aristotle and Generally Have More Fun** ~ Gretchen Craft Rubin
- **It’s All Too Much: An Easy Plan for Living a Richer Life With Less Stuff** ~ Peter Walsh
- **Wear This, Toss That! Hundreds of Fashion and Beauty Swaps That Save Your Looks, Save Your Budget and Save You Time** ~ Amy E. Goodman
- **Lighten Up: Love What You Have, Have What You Need, Be Happier With Less** ~ Peter Walsh
- **Happier: Learn the Secrets to Daily Joy and Lasting Fulfillment** ~ Tal Ben-Shahar
- **The Last Lecture** ~ Randy Pausch
- **Battle Hymn of the Tiger Mother** ~ Amy Chua

- After reading this, you may want to combine your meeting with a free clothing swap to clear out your closets
- not exactly self-help – but definitely a life-changing read
- Would make an interesting discussion book. Caused plenty of controversy on TV talk shows, newspapers and blogs. Lots to discuss.

Warmest wishes for a very Happy Healthy 2013 filled with “Time” to enjoy the small moments life has to offer.

--Lisa Jones, Readers’ Services Librarian

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“Be careful about reading health books. You may die of a misprint.”

- Mark Twain

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If your Book Club would like to recommend a book to our readers, please send us an email at Readerservices@syossetlibrary.org and we will share it in a future newsletter.