

Titles for *Books Sandwiched In*, 2011-2012

Books Sandwiched In is a book discussion group sponsored by the Friends of the Chapel Hill Public Library. Discussions are open to all, and you are welcome to bring your lunch. Meetings are 11:30am until 12:30pm. Locations will vary—check the Friends web site to be sure--<http://friendschpl.org>.

The book summaries below are taken from various sources, primarily publishers and reviewers, on the internet, where you may find additional information about the book.

Aug 3, 2011 -- Meeting Room, Library in the Pritchard Park location

Eating Animals by Jonathan Safran Foer – 352p, Little, Brown and Company, 2009

The Summer Reading Program book selection for both UNC and Duke freshmen is a memoir-like account of America's eating habits and how people justify their food choices. Foer is his own subject for investigation. He looks at vegetarianism, meat-eating and meat providers, and his own loving grandmother's meat-and-potatoes comfort food. He combines facts, anecdotes, and his own personal, inward search to solve a moral question one reviewer calls an omnivore's dilemma.

Sept 7, 2011 – Flyleaf Books, Martin Luther King, Jr Blvd

A Thousand Acres by Jane Smiley – 384p, Anchor Books, 2003

When a successful Iowa farmer divides his farm between three daughters and one of them objects, the action sets off a chain of events that reveals dark family truths and long-suppressed emotions. It has been viewed as a reimagining of Shakespeare's *King Lear* in the twentieth century. Jane Smiley takes on themes of truth, justice, love and pride to present a novel about moral responsibility and in so doing, gives readers a winner of the Pulitzer Prize.

Oct 5, 2011 -- Flyleaf Books, Martin Luther King, Jr Blvd

The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks by Rebecca Skloot – 369p, Crown Publishing Group, 2010

Henrietta Lacks, known to scientists as HeLa, was a poor Southern tobacco farmer descended from slaves.

Rebecca Skloot tells the story of Henrietta from her being in a ward in Johns Hopkins Hospital in the 50's ostensibly being treated for a disease that was fatal. Cells that were taken from her blood were saved and were used in developing the polio vaccine and for other medical advances including cloning. No one in her family knew any of this until research led to many questions. This is a dramatic story of scientific discovery and human consequences.

Nov 2, 2011 -- Flyleaf Books, Martin Luther King, Jr Blvd

Cutting for Stone by Abraham Verghese – 560 p, Knopf Doubleday, 2009

Marion and Shiva Stone Are twin brothers born of a secret union between a beautiful Indian nun and a brash British surgeon. Orphaned by their mother's death and their father's disappearance, they come of age when Ethiopia hovers on the brink of revolution. Both sons are fascinated by medicine and the story moves from Addis Ababa to New York City and back again. Verghese has written a story of love and betrayal, medicine and miracles, and two brothers whose fates are forever intertwined.

Dec 7, 2011 – Place TBD

Trek: An American Woman, Two Small Children and Survival in World War II by Mary Hunt Jentsch - 250p, McWitty Press, 2008

This is a poignant memoir of one American woman's struggle in Germany during World War II. Separated from her German husband, Mary Hunt Jentsch protected her children from nightly air raids, rooftop fires, hunger, and the invading Red army. This is rural Germany under siege, with the people both kind and generous and otherwise. Her grandson, Stephen Mumford, gives times and places in notes in each chapter.

Feb 1, 2012 – Place TBD

Pearl Buck in China: Journey to the Good Earth by Hilary Spurling - 352 p, Simon and Schuster, 2010

This much honored biographer unearths the life and work of Nobel Prize winner Pearl Buck, whose novels captured ordinary life in China. It is an account of her life in China as the child of Presbyterian missionaries and how the secrets and griefs of childhood can shape a writer. Buck was the first American woman to win the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1938.

Mar 7, 2012 – Place TBD

Brooklyn by Colm Toibin – 262p, Viking, 2009

The young woman Eilis leaves Enniscorthy in Ireland where opportunities are limited in the 1950's to migrate to the US. She finds a new life in Brooklyn, New York, with employment, education and romance with an Italian-American named Tony. When everything seems to be going right, there is the death of her sister back home and her loyalties are repeatedly tested as she returns to her homeland and makes critical choices. It is a coming of age story of the fifties.

Apr 4, 2012 – Place TBD

The Warmth of Other Suns: The Epic Story of America's Great Migration by Isabel Wilkerson – 640p, Random House, 2010

Isabel Wilkerson has written an epic story of the decades-long migration of black citizens who fled the South for northern and western cities in search of a better life. Using extensive research she describes three families to give a stunning account of how lives were changed and how the "unrecognized immigration" of almost six million individuals led to changes in the cities and altered the face of America

May 2, 2012 – Place TBD

The Camel Bookmobile by Masha Hamilton – 320p, Harper Collins, 2007

This novel follows Fiona Sweeney, a New York librarian, to Garissa, Kenya as she seeks to make a difference in the world. Mr. Abasi enlists her to run the camel bookmobile. She meets memorable characters and must deal with tensions that arise among those who prefer oral traditions to books. Ultimately each character is changed by the bookmobile but not in ways they or we might expect.

June 6, 2012 – Place TBD

Sarah's Key by Tatiana de Rosnay – 304 p, St. Martin's Press, 2007

This novel fictionalizes the 1942 Paris round-ups and deportations, in which thousands of Jewish families were arrested, held in the Velodrome, and then transported to Auschwitz. Some sixty years later Julia Tezac, an American journalist, is assigned to cover the anniversary of the round-ups. She discovers she will be living in the apartment from which Jewish occupants had been dispossessed. It was acquired by her husband Bertrand's family after the deportations. She resolves to find out what has happened to the former occupants, Wladyslaw and Rywka Starzynski and their 10-year-old Sarah and 4-year-old Michel. The more she discovers about Sarah, the only family member to survive, the more she questions the actions of Bertrand's family. The book reveals the stunning secret that threatens Julia's marriage and her own conflicting loyalties.

July 4, 2012 (date may be changed) – Place TBD

Cleopatra, a Biography, by Stacy Schiff - 370p, Little, Brown, 2010

The author gives a vigorous narrative of the life and personality of the Egyptian ruler, portraying Cleopatra as a shrewd political strategist who used her affairs to further her own power. She was the most famous woman in the ancient world at the dawn of the first millennium. Schiff researches the myths and propaganda to give insights into Cleopatra's celebrity and the most celebrated incidents in her career.