



The Book Discussion Group

meets on the LAST Tuesday of every month (except July) at 7:00 p.m. in the lower level meeting room or staff lounge. The library is located at 800 Alma St., at Ravenswood.

We read fiction, nonfiction and biographies and try to pick titles that are easy to get at the library or the local bookstore. Sometimes we have guest speakers, sometimes the author shows up, and there's always a great snack. Each time that you come to a book discussion, you will receive a reader's guide, author notes, and related reading recommendations. And if you can't make it to every meeting, you will get e-mails to help you stay connected. For more information and to suggest books contact:

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Menlo Park Library Book Club Reading List January through August 2010

Tues, January 26th *The Girl Who Played With Fire* by Stieg Larsson 512 pages (2009)

This is the second book in the late Swedish author Stieg Larsson's Millennium Trilogy, teaming two unlikely sleuths—middle aged crusading journalist Mikael Blomkvist and twenty something punk hacker savant Lisbeth Salander. We had a record book group turnout when we read the first book, *The Girl With the Dragon Tattoo*—and we have high hopes for a stimulating discussion of the sequel. This time Lisbeth must return to the darkness of her own past (more specifically, an event coldly known as "All the Evil") if she is to stay one step ahead--and alive.

Tues, Feb 22nd *Olive Kitteridge* by Elizabeth Strout 304p (2008) Pulitzer Prize winner

This is a collection of thirteen short stories set in the small coastal town of Crosby, Maine. Here, Olive Kitteridge, a retired schoolteacher and unofficial town crier, deplors the changes in her town and in the world at large. The story explores her major and minor roles in many lives, including a lounge singer haunted by a past love, a young man grieving over his lost mother, her stoic husband, and her own resentful son. Says *Booklist*, "Though loneliness and loss haunt these pages, Strout also supplies gentle humor and a nourishing dose of hope. People are sustained by the rhythms of ordinary life and the natural wonders of coastal Maine, and even Olive is sometimes caught off guard by life's baffling beauty."

Tuesday, March 30th *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald 1925

You've probably already read this book. Well, it's time to read it again. We'll explore "the



American Dream” of today and yesteryear and see if this novel of class and economic differences in roaring twenties New York City and Long Island, still holds up in the new millennium in Silicon Valley.

Tuesday, April 20th City of Thieves by David Benioff 272 pages (2008)

Many of our book group members enjoyed the World War Two coming of age story, **The Book Thief** by Marcus Zusak. This novel has many of the same elements of realities, fantasies, brutality and compassion—but here, the setting is frozen, starving Leningrad and the main characters are two teenage boys. The boys, Lev and Kolya are elements of reality and fantasy, brutality and compassion in this story of two young prisoners taken prisoner by their own army-- on a minor charge. Rather than facing death, they are sent on an impossible quest by a powerful Soviet commander, who wants them to find a dozen eggs for his daughter’s wedding cake.

Tuesday, May 25th My Life in France by Julia Child (2004)

Just imagine the snacks we can have at this discussion! With all the hoopla around the Julie and Julia film and the Julie Powell book of the same name, it’s time to hear from the great French chef herself, in this autobiography written with help from her nephew. Says one reader at BarnesandNoble.com “This book was an inspiration to me because I am not the best cook but this book made me realize that before France, neither was Julia. I loved Julia's advice to never apologize for your cooking; that is advice that I have taken to heart.
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Tuesday, June 29th Superfreakonomics: Global cooling, patriotic prostitutes and why suicide bombers should be life insurance.

by Steven D. Levitt and Stephen J Dubner 270p. (2009)

With a sensationalistic title like this, small wonder this nonfiction book has become a bestseller. Truth be told, our book group generally stays away from stuff like this, but so many people from so many different walks of life asked to discuss it, that it made the list. In nutshell, the book discusses the sociological and psychological aspects of economics and how people respond to incentives. Join us at tax time for a discussion of the topics that book groups are never supposed to discuss: sex, money and politics! Author Levitt is an economics professor at the University of Chicago. Co-writer Dubner is a journalist based in New York City.

NO JULY MEETING—to allow time for the August Long Summer Read:

Tuesday August 31st Wolf Hall by Hillary Mantel 560p. (2009)

This 2009 Booker Prize Winner about the power and influence of Oliver Cromwell in the court of Henry VIII in England some 500 years ago is our long summer read. Be prepared for discussions about love, lust, religion, power, and the separation of church and state.