

Books to vote on for Book Club – please choose your top six. Put a checkmark in the “vote” column for your choices.

VOTE	Book Title	Description
	Next Year in Havana by Chanel Cleeton	<p><i>Havana, 1958.</i> The daughter of a sugar baron, nineteen-year-old Elisa Perez is part of Cuba's high society, where she is largely sheltered from the country's growing political unrest—until she embarks on a clandestine affair with a passionate revolutionary...</p> <p><i>Miami, 2017.</i> Freelance writer Marisol Ferrera grew up hearing romantic stories of Cuba from her late grandmother Elisa, who was forced to flee with her family during the revolution. Elisa's last wish was for Marisol to scatter her ashes in the country of her birth. Arriving in Havana, Marisol comes face-to-face with the contrast of Cuba's tropical, timeless beauty and its perilous political climate. When more family history comes to light and Marisol finds herself attracted to a man with secrets of his own, she'll need the lessons of her grandmother's past to help her understand the true meaning of courage.</p>
	Moloka'i: A Novel by Alan Brennert,	<p>This richly imagined novel, set in Hawai'i more than a century ago, is an extraordinary epic of a little-known time and place—and a deeply moving testament to the resiliency of the human spirit. Rachel Kalama, a spirited seven-year-old Hawaiian girl, dreams of visiting far-off lands like her father, a merchant seaman. Then one day a rose-colored mark appears on her skin, and those dreams are stolen from her. Taken from her home and family, Rachel is sent to Kalaupapa, the quarantined leprosy settlement on the island of Moloka'i. Here her life is supposed to end—but instead she discovers it is only just beginning. With a vibrant cast of vividly realized characters, <i>Moloka'i</i> is the true-to-life chronicle of a people who embraced life in the face of death. Such is the warmth, humor, and compassion of this novel that "few readers will remain unchanged by Rachel's story" (mostlyfiction.com).</p>
	The Tea Girl of Hummingbird Lane by Lisa See	<p>In their remote mountain village, Li-yan and her family align their lives around the seasons and the farming of tea. For the Akha people, ensconced in ritual and routine, life goes on as it has for generations—until a stranger appears at the village gate in a jeep, the first automobile any of the villagers has ever seen.</p> <p>The stranger's arrival marks the first entrance of the modern world in the lives of the Akha people. Slowly, Li-yan, one of the few educated girls on her mountain, begins to reject the customs that shaped her early life. When she has a baby out of wedlock—conceived with a man her parents consider a poor choice—she rejects the tradition that would compel her to give the child over to be killed, and instead leaves her, wrapped in a blanket with a tea cake tucked in its folds, near an orphanage in a nearby city.</p> <p>As Li-yan comes into herself, leaving her insular village for an education, a business, and city life, her daughter, Haley, is raised in California by loving adoptive parents. Despite her privileged childhood, Haley wonders about her origins. Across the ocean Li-yan longs for her lost daughter. Over the course of years, each searches for meaning in the study of Pu'er, the tea that has shaped their family's destiny for centuries. A powerful story about circumstances, culture, and distance, <i>The Tea Girl of Hummingbird Lane</i> paints an unforgettable portrait of a little known region and its people and celebrates the bond of family.</p>
	Tell the Wolves I'm Home by Carol Rifka Brunt	<p>1987. There's only one person who has ever truly understood fourteen-year-old June Elbus, and that's her uncle, the renowned painter Finn Weiss. Shy at school and distant from her older sister, June can only be herself in Finn's company; he is her godfather, confidant, and best friend. So when he dies, far too young, of a mysterious illness her mother can barely speak about, June's world is turned upside down. But Finn's death brings a surprise acquaintance into June's life - someone who will help her to heal and to question what she thinks she knows about Finn, her family, and even her own heart. At Finn's funeral, June notices a strange man lingering just beyond the crowd. A few days later, she receives a package in the mail. Inside is a beautiful teapot she recognizes from Finn's apartment and a note from Toby, the stranger, asking for an opportunity to meet. As the two begin to spend time together, June realizes she's not the only one who misses Finn, and if she can bring herself to trust this unexpected friend, he just might be the one she needs the most. An emotionally charged coming-of-age novel, <i>Tell the Wolves I'm Home</i> is a tender story of love lost and found, an unforgettable portrait of the way compassion can make us whole again.</p>

	Eleanor & Park by Rainbow Rowell	Set over the course of one school year in 1986, this is the story of two star-crossed misfits-smart enough to know that first love almost never lasts, but brave and desperate enough to try. When Eleanor meets Park, you'll remember your own first love-and just how hard it pulled you under.
	The Wedding Date by Jasmine Guillory	Agreeing to go to a wedding with a guy she gets stuck with in an elevator is something Alexa Monroe wouldn't normally do. But there's something about Drew Nichols that's too hard to resist. On the eve of his ex's wedding festivities, Drew is minus a plus one. Until a power outage strands him with the perfect candidate for a fake girlfriend.... After Alexa and Drew have more fun than they ever thought possible, Drew has to fly back to Los Angeles and his job as a pediatric surgeon, and Alexa heads home to Berkeley, where she's the mayor's chief of staff. Too bad they can't stop thinking about the other....They're just two high-powered professionals on a collision course toward the long distance dating disaster of the century--or closing the gap between what they think they need and what they truly want....
	The Silent Patient by Alex Michaelides	<i>The Silent Patient</i> is a shocking psychological thriller of a woman's act of violence against her husband - and of the therapist obsessed with uncovering her motive. Alicia Berenson's life is seemingly perfect. A famous painter married to an in-demand fashion photographer, she lives in a grand house with big windows overlooking a park in one of London's most desirable areas. One evening, her husband Gabriel returns home late from a fashion shoot, and Alicia shoots him five times in the face and then never speaks another word. Alicia's refusal to talk, or give any kind of explanation, turns a domestic tragedy into something far grander, a mystery that captures the public imagination and casts Alicia into notoriety. The price of her art skyrockets, and she, the silent patient, is hidden away from the tabloids and spotlight at the Grove, a secure forensic unit in North London. Theo Faber is a criminal psychotherapist who has waited a long time for the opportunity to work with Alicia. His determination to get her to talk and unravel the mystery of why she shot her husband takes him down a twisting path into his own motivations - a search for the truth that threatens to consume him....
	The Whisper Network by Chandler Baker	Sloane, Ardie, Grace, and Rosalita have worked at Truviv, Inc., for years. The sudden death of Truviv's CEO means their boss, Ames, will likely take over the entire company. Each of the women has a different relationship with Ames, who has always been surrounded by whispers about how he treats women. Those whispers have been ignored, swept under the rug, hidden away by those in charge. But the world has changed, and the women are watching this promotion differently. This time, when they find out Ames is making an inappropriate move on a colleague, they aren't willing to let it go. This time, they've decided enough is enough. Sloane and her colleagues' decision to take a stand sets in motion a catastrophic shift in the office. Lies will be uncovered. Secrets will be exposed. And not everyone will survive. All of their lives - as women, colleagues, mothers, wives, friends, even adversaries - will change dramatically as a result. "If only you had listened to us," they tell us in Chandler Baker's <i>Whisper Network</i> , "none of this would have happened."
	A Simple Favor by Darcey Bell	A single mother's life is turned upside down when her best friend vanishes in this chilling debut thriller in the vein of <i>Gone Girl</i> and <i>The Girl on the Train</i> . It starts with a simple favor—an ordinary kindness mothers do for one another. When her best friend, Emily, asks Stephanie to pick up her son Nicky after school, she happily says yes. Nicky and her son, Miles, are classmates and best friends, and the five-year-olds love being together—just like she and Emily. A widow and stay-at-home mommy blogger living in woody suburban Connecticut, Stephanie was lonely until she met Emily, a sophisticated PR executive whose job in Manhattan demands so much of her time. But Emily doesn't come back. She doesn't answer calls or return texts. Stephanie knows something is terribly wrong—Emily would never leave Nicky, no matter what the police say. Terrified, she reaches out to her blog readers for help. She also reaches out to Emily's husband, the handsome, reticent Sean, offering emotional support. It's the least she can do for her best friend. Then, she and Sean receive shocking news. Emily is dead. The nightmare of her disappearance is over. Or is it? Because soon, Stephanie will begin to see that nothing—not friendship, love, or even an ordinary favor—is as simple as it seems. A

		<p><i>Simple Favor</i> is a remarkable tale of psychological suspense—a clever and twisting free-fall of a ride filled with betrayals and reversals, twists and turns, secrets and revelations, love and loyalty, murder and revenge. Darcey Bell masterfully ratchets up the tension in a taut, unsettling, and completely absorbing story that holds you in its grip until the final page.</p>
	<p>The Secrets You Keep by Kate White</p>	<p>What would you do if you realized that your new husband, a man you adore, is keeping secrets from you—secrets with terrifying consequences? Bryn Harper, an accomplished self-help author, already has plenty to deal with. She's still recovering from a devastating car accident that has left her haunted by recurring, smoke-filled nightmares. Worse still, she can't shake the ominous feeling her dreams contain a warning. In the beginning, Bryn's husband Guy couldn't have been more supportive. But after moving into a new house together, disturbing incidents occur and Guy grows evasive, secretive. What the hell is going on, she wonders? Then, a woman hired to cater their dinner party is brutally murdered. As Bryn's world unravels—and yet another woman in town is slain—she must summon her old strength to find answers and protect her own life. Her nightmares may in fact hold the key to unlocking the truth and unmasking the murderer. With unexpected, riveting twists, <i>The Secrets You Keep</i> is an utterly compelling psychological thriller that once again showcases Kate White's extraordinary storytelling talent.</p>
	<p>Five Days at Memorial by Sheri Fink</p>	<p>In the tradition of the best investigative journalism, physician and reporter Sheri Fink reconstructs 5 days at Memorial Medical Center and draws the reader into the lives of those who struggled mightily to survive and maintain life amid chaos. After Katrina struck and the floodwaters rose, the power failed, and the heat climbed, exhausted caregivers chose to designate certain patients last for rescue. Months later, several of those caregivers faced criminal allegations that they deliberately injected numerous patients with drugs to hasten their deaths.</p> <p><i>Five Days at Memorial</i>, the culmination of six years of reporting, unspools the mystery of what happened in those days, bringing the reader into a hospital fighting for its life and into a conversation about the most terrifying form of health care rationing. In a voice at once involving and fair, masterful and intimate, Fink exposes the hidden dilemmas of end-of-life care and reveals just how ill-prepared we are for the impact of large-scale disasters—and how we can do better. A remarkable book, engrossing from start to finish, <i>Five Days at Memorial</i> radically transforms your understanding of human nature in crisis.</p>
	<p>The Moment of Lift: How Empowering Women Changes the World by Melinda Gates</p>	<p>For the last twenty years, Melinda Gates has been on a mission to find solutions for people with the most urgent needs, wherever they live. Throughout this journey, one thing has become increasingly clear to her: If you want to lift a society up, you need to stop keeping women down. In this moving and compelling book, Melinda shares lessons she's learned from the inspiring people she's met during her work and travels around the world. As she writes in the introduction, "That is why I had to write this book—to share the stories of people who have given focus and urgency to my life. I want all of us to see ways we can lift women up where we live." Melinda's unforgettable narrative is backed by startling data as she presents the issues that most need our attention—from child marriage to lack of access to contraceptives to gender inequity in the workplace. And, for the first time, she writes about her personal life and the road to equality in her own marriage. Throughout, she shows how there has never been more opportunity to change the world—and ourselves. Writing with emotion, candor, and grace, she introduces us to remarkable women and shows the power of connecting with one another. When we lift others up, they lift us up, too.</p>
	<p>The Orchid Thief by Susan Orlean</p>	<p>A modern classic of personal journalism, <i>The Orchid Thief</i> is Susan Orlean's wickedly funny, elegant, and captivating tale of an amazing obsession. Determined to clone an endangered flower—the rare ghost orchid <i>Polyrrhiza lindenii</i>—a deeply eccentric and oddly attractive man named John Laroche leads Orlean on an unforgettable tour of America's strange flower-selling subculture, through Florida's swamps and beyond, along with the Seminoles who help him and the forces of justice who fight him. In the end, Orlean—and the reader—will have more respect for underdog determination and a powerful new definition of passion. In this new edition, coming fifteen years after its initial publication and twenty years after she first met the "orchid thief," Orlean revisits this unforgettable world, and the route by which it was brought to the screen in the film <i>Adaptation</i>, in a new retrospective essay.</p>

	<p>The Girls of Atomic City by Denise Kiernan</p>	<p>At the height of World War II, Oak Ridge, Tennessee, was home to 75,000 residents, and consumed more electricity than New York City, yet it was shrouded in such secrecy that it did not appear on any map. Thousands of civilians, many of them young women from small towns across the U.S., were recruited to this secret city, enticed by the promise of solid wages and war-ending work. What were they actually <i>doing</i> there? Very few knew. The purpose of this mysterious government project was kept a secret from the outside world and from the majority of the residents themselves. Some wondered why, despite the constant work and round-the-clock activity in this makeshift town, did no tangible product of any kind ever seem to leave its guarded gates? The women who kept this town running would find out at the end of the war, when Oak Ridge's secret was revealed and changed the world forever. Drawing from the voices and experiences of the women who lived and worked in Oak Ridge, <i>The Girls of Atomic City</i> rescues a remarkable, forgotten chapter of World War II from obscurity. Denise Kiernan captures the spirit of the times through these women: their pluck, their desire to contribute, and their enduring courage. "A phenomenal story," and <i>Publishers Weekly</i> called it an "intimate and revealing glimpse into one of the most important scientific developments in history." "Kiernan has amassed a deep reservoir of intimate details of what life was like for women living in the secret city...Rosie, it turns out, did much more than drive rivets." —<i>The Washington Post</i></p>
	<p>Behind the Beautiful Forevers by Katherine Boo</p>	<p>In this brilliantly written, fast-paced book, based on three years of uncompromising reporting, a bewildering age of global change and inequality is made human. Annawadi is a makeshift settlement in the shadow of luxury hotels near the Mumbai airport, and as India starts to prosper, Annawadians are electric with hope. Abdul, a reflective and enterprising Muslim teenager, sees "a fortune beyond counting" in the recyclable garbage that richer people throw away. Asha, a woman of formidable wit and deep scars from a childhood in rural poverty, has identified an alternate route to the middle class: political corruption. With a little luck, her sensitive, beautiful daughter-Annawadi's "most-everything girl"-will soon become its first female college graduate. And even the poorest Annawadians, like Kalu, a fifteen-year-old scrap-metal thief, believe themselves inching closer to the good lives and good times they call "the full enjoy." But then Abdul the garbage sorter is falsely accused in a shocking tragedy; terror and a global recession rock the city; and suppressed tensions over religion, caste, sex, power and economic envy turn brutal. As the tenderest individual hopes intersect with the greatest global truths, the true contours of a competitive age are revealed. And so, too, are the imaginations and courage of the people of Annawadi. With intelligence, humor, and deep insight into what connects human beings to one another in an era of tumultuous change, <i>Behind the Beautiful Forevers</i> carries the reader headlong into one of the 21st century's hidden worlds, and into the lives of people impossible to forget.</p>
	<p>Talking to Strangers: What We Should Know About the People We Don't Know by Malcolm Gladwell</p>	<p>How did Fidel Castro fool the CIA for a generation? Why did Neville Chamberlain think he could trust Adolf Hitler? Why are campus sexual assaults on the rise? Do television sitcoms teach us something about the way we relate to each other that isn't true? <i>Talking to Strangers</i> is a classically Gladwellian intellectual adventure, a challenging and controversial excursion through history, psychology, and scandals taken straight from the news. He revisits the deceptions of Bernie Madoff, the trial of Amanda Knox, the suicide of Sylvia Plath, the Jerry Sandusky pedophilia scandal at Penn State University, and the death of Sandra Bland - throwing our understanding of these and other stories into doubt. Something is very wrong, Gladwell argues, with the tools and strategies we use to make sense of people we don't know. And because we don't know how to talk to strangers, we are inviting conflict and misunderstanding in ways that have a profound effect on our lives and our world.</p>
	<p>The Goldfinch</p>	<p>Theodore Decker was 13 years old when his mother was killed in a bombing at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. The tragedy changes the course of his life, sending him on a stirring odyssey of grief and guilt, reinvention and redemption, and even love. Through it all, he holds on to one tangible piece of hope from that terrible day -- a painting of a tiny bird chained to its perch.</p>