

GREAT READS FOR BOOK GROUPS!

Compiled April 2009

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Angel, Marc. *The search committee : a novel*. Jerusalem; New York : Urim Fiction, c2008. ISBN 9789655240122, 155 p. Not available in paperback.

When the leader of a venerable Torah academy passes away, a search committee begins to investigate two candidates, both serious and committed Torah scholars. However, the resemblance ends there. One, the previous leader's son, is a staunch traditionalist determined to keep to the old ways, while the other is a university graduate with a modern, open-minded perspective. The candidates hold opposing views about the role of the yeshiva, the ideals of Torah Judaism, the role of women in the community, and the future of Orthodoxy and the Jewish people. As they, their wives, colleagues, students, and donors address the Committee, a dramatic story

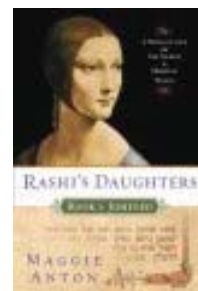
emerges about the ways in which a traditional community may embrace or reject the modern world. Not available in paperback.

Call: FICTION Angel

Anton, Maggie . *Rashi's Daughters*. Book 1 Joheved; Book 2 Miriam. Plume, 2005-2007. ISBN 9780452288638 (Book 1), 475p. Available in paperback.

Returning to eleventh-century Troyes, France, to take over the family winemaking business, Talmudic scholar Salomon ben Isaac, a man without sons, secretly begins teaching the Talmud to his three daughters, including his eldest, Joheved, a young woman who is forced to choose between her love of learning and marital happiness when she becomes betrothed to Meir ben Samuel.

Call: FICTION Anton



Bart, Michael.; Corona, Laurel. *Until our last breath : a Holocaust story of love and partisan resistance*. New York : St. Martin's Press, c2008. ISBN 9780312378073, 306 p.

Documents the co-author's parents' secret role in the Avengers Jewish resistance movement, including their dramatic escape with fellow members of the underground and their relationship with Zionist leader Abba Kovner.

Call: 737.4 Bart

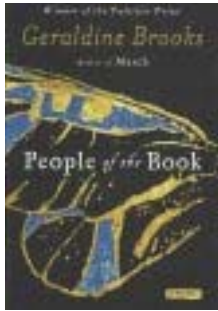


Blum, Jenna. *Those who save us*. Austin : Harcourt, c2004. ISBN 0151010196, 482 p. Available in paperback.

For fifty years, Anna Schlemmer has refused to talk about her life in Germany during World War II. Her daughter, Trudy, was only three when she and her mother were liberated by an American soldier and went to live with him in Minnesota. Trudy's sole evidence of the past is an old photograph; a family portrait showing Anna, Trudy, and a Nazi officer, the Obersturmfuhrer of Buchenwald. Driven by the guilt of her heritage, Trudy, now a professor of German history, begins investigating the past and finally unearths the dramatic and heartbreaking truth of her mother's life. Combining a passionate, doomed love story, a vivid evocation of life during the war, and a poignant mother/daughter drama, *Those Who Save Us* is a profound exploration of what we endure to survive and the legacy of shame.

Call: FICTION Blum





Brooks, Geraldine. *People of the book : a novel*. New York : Viking, 2008. ISBN 9780670018215, 371 p. Available in paperback

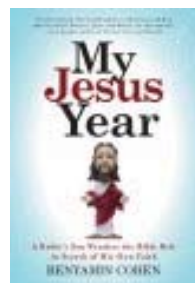
In 1996, Hanna Heath, a young Australian book conservator is called to analyze the famed Sarajevo Haggadah, a priceless six-hundred-year-old Jewish prayer book that has been salvaged from a destroyed Bosnian library. When Hanna discovers a series of artifacts in the centuries' old, she unwittingly exposes an international cover up.

Call: FICTION Brooks

Burkett, Elinor. *Golda*. New York : Harper, c2008. ISBN 9780060786656, 483 p. Available in paperback July 2009

The first female head of state in the Western world and one of the most influential women in modern history, Golda Meir was one of the founders of the State of Israel, the architect of its socialist infrastructure, and its most tenacious international defender. Historian-journalist Burkett looks beyond Meir's well-known accomplishments to the complex motivations and ideals, personal victories and disappointments, of her charismatic public persona. Beginning with Meir's childhood in virulently anti-Semitic Russia and her family's subsequent relocation to the United States, Burkett places Meir within the framework of the American immigrant experience, the Holocaust, and the singlemindedness of a generation that carved a nation out of its own nightmares and dreams.

Call: BIO Meir



Cohen, Benjamen. *My Jesus year : a rabbi's son searches for faith in the Bible belt*. New York, NY : HarperCollins, 2008. ISBN 9780061245176, 252 p.

Available in paperback September 09

An Atlanta-born son of a rabbi describes his year-long spiritual quest during which he reinvigorated his flagging enthusiasm for orthodox Judaism by touring Christian pop culture venues.

Call: 799.7 Cohen

de Rosnay, Tatiana de. *Sarah's Key*. New York : St. Martin's Griffin, 2008. ISBN 0312370849, 294 p. Available in paperback.

On the anniversary of the roundup of Jews by the French police in Paris, Julia is asked to write an article on this dark episode and embarks on an investigation that leads her to long-hidden family secrets and to the ordeal of Sarah.

Call: FICTION De Rosnay



Dische, Irene. *Empress of Weehawken*. New York : Farrar Strous & Giroux, 2007. ISBN 9780374299125, 307 p. Available in paperback.

This novel is a fictionalized "memoir" by Irene Dische's grandmother...her take on men, how she escaped from the Nazis, and how she deals with the waywardness of her impossible daughter, Renate, and her granddaughter, Irene. An absorbing and touching read.

Call: FICTION Dische

Etzioni-Halevy, Eva. *The triumph of Deborah*. New York : Plume, c2008.

ISBN 9780452289062 (pbk.),358 p. Available in paperback.

A fictional account of how the biblical heroine Deborah saves the Israelites from destruction at the hands of their Canaanite enemies by coercing the warrior Barak to launch a preemptive strike in which he succeeds against all odds.

Call: FICTION Etzioni-Halevy



Grant, Linda. *The clothes on their backs*. New York : Scribner, 2008.

ISBN 9781844085415, 293 p. Available in paperback.

In a red brick mansion block off the Marylebone Road, Vivien, a sensitive, bookish girl grows up sealed off from both past and present by her timid refugee parents. Then one morning a glamorous uncle appears, dressed in a mohair suit, with a diamond watch on his wrist and a girl in a leopard-skin hat on his arm. Why is Uncle Sandor so violently unwelcome in her parents' home? This is a novel about survival - both banal and heroic - and a young woman who discovers the complications, even betrayals, that inevitably accompany the fierce desire to live.

Set against the backdrop of a London from the 1950s to the present day, *The Clothes on Their Backs* is a wise and tender novel about the clothes we choose to wear, the personalities we dress ourselves in, and about how they define us all.

Call: FICTION Dische

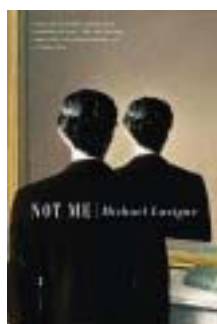
Gruen, Sara. *Water for elephants : a novel*. Chapel Hill, N.C. :

Algonquin Books, 2006.

ISBN 1565124995, 335 p..Available in paperback.

Ninety-something-year-old Jacob Jankowski remembers his time in the circus as a young man during the Great Depression, and his friendship with Marlena, the star of the equestrian act, and Rosie, the elephant, who gave them hope.

Call: FICTION Gruen



Lavigne, Michael. *Not me : a novel*. New York : Random House, c2005.

ISBN 1400063116 (alk. paper), 300 p Available in paperback.

A story of two men, father and son, through sixty years of uncertain memory, distorted history, and assumed identity.

Call: FICTION Lavigne

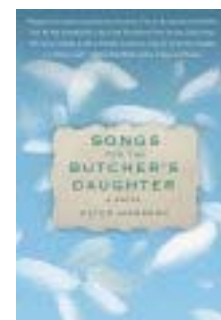
Manseau, Peter. *Songs for the butcher's daughter : a novel*.

New York : Free Press, 2008. ISBN 9781416538707.

Available in paperback June 09

Frustrated by a career that stalled before it began, a young American writer becomes an unlikely translator for a ninety-something Russian Yiddish poet who recorded his life story in a series of notebooks, a job that is complicated by the younger man's affair and entanglement in a cumbersome lie.

Call: FICTION Manseau

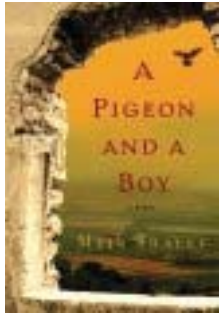


Matalon Lagnado, Lucette. *The man in the white sharkskin suit : my family's exodus from Old Cairo to the New World*. New York : Ecco, c2007.

ISBN 9780060822125, 340 p. Available in paperback.

The daughter of a once-successful Jewish boulevardier traces her youth in post-World War II Cairo before and after Gamal Abdel Nasser's nationalization of Egyptian industry, an event that caused her family to lose everything and forced them to flee to America

Call: 799.7 Lagnado



Shalev, Meir. *A pigeon and a boy*. translated from the Hebrew by Evan Fallenberg. New York : Schocken Books, c2007. ISBN9780805242515, 311 p.

Available in paperback.

During the 1948 War of Independence--a time when pigeons are still used to deliver battlefield messages--a gifted young pigeon handler is mortally wounded. In the moments before his death, he dispatches one last pigeon, carrying his extraordinary gift to the girl he has loved since adolescence. Intertwined with this story is the contemporary tale of Yair Mendelsohn, who has his own legacy from the 1948 war. Yair is a tour guide specializing in bird watching trips who, in middle age, falls in love again with a childhood girlfriend.

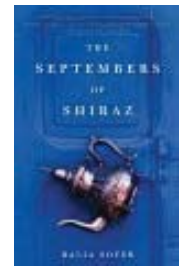
Call: FICTION Shalev

Sofer, Dalia. *The Septembers of Shiraz*. New York : Ecco/HarperCollins, c2007.

ISBN 9780061130403, 340p. Available in paperback.

A Jewish family is affected by the events during the aftermath of the Iranian revolution.

Call: FICTION Sofer



Zusak, Markus. *The book thief*. New York : Alfred A. Knopf : Distributed by Random House, c2006. ISBN 0375831002 (trade) 552 p Available in paperback.

Trying to make sense of the horrors of World War II, Death relates the story of Liesel--a young German girl whose book-stealing and story-telling talents help sustain her family and the Jewish man they are hiding, as well as their neighbors.

Sydney Taylor Award

Call: YA HOLOCAUST FICTION Zusak

ANYTHING BY THESE GREAT AUTHORS!

S.Y. Agnon
Saul Bellow
Jonathan Safran Foer
A.B. Yehoshua
Tova Mirvis

Nathan Englander
Michael Chabon
Chaim Potok
Allegra Goodman
Dara Horn

Elie Wiesel
Philip Roth
Daniel Silva