

MVAH ZOOM BOOK CLUB

May 13, 2021

Next MVAH ZOOM Book Club June 10th at 3PM

Attendees: Host: Barbara Brennan Cher Terry Betsy Stephens Louise & Robert McLean	Carol Mattaino Norma Brodsky Sarah Tatum Karen Barnes Linda Flint Carolyn Tickel
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NOTE: I think in the beginning we decided to limit the books discussed to one or maybe two, but no more. It was suggested to expand a bit more on the book, the author – at least a paragraph about it and why you are recommending it. Thank you!

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1. **Sarah Tatum – As the Crow Flies by Craig Johnson.** Published 2012. 354 pages. Embarking on his eighth adventure in As the Crow Flies, Sheriff Longmire is searching the Cheyenne Reservation for a site to host his daughter's wedding, when he sees a

woman fall to her death. Teaming up with beautiful tribal chief Lolo Long, Walt sets out to investigate the suspicious death. Similar to Tony Hillerman books.

2. **Betsy Stephens – The Revolution in Color.** By Jane Kamensky. About John Singleton Copley. Published 2016. 544 pages.

This bold new history recovers an unknown American Revolution as seen through the eyes of Boston-born painter John Singleton Copley.

Boston in the 1740s: a bustling port at the edge of the British empire. A boy comes of age in a small wooden house along the Long Wharf, which juts into the harbor, as though reaching for London thousands of miles across the ocean. Sometime in his childhood, he learns to draw.

That boy was John Singleton Copley, who became, by the 1760s, colonial America's premier painter. His brush captured the faces of his neighbors—ordinary men like Paul Revere, John Hancock, and Samuel Adams—who would become the revolutionary heroes of a new United States. Today, in museums across America, Copley's brilliant portraits evoke patriotic fervor and rebellious optimism.

3. **Cher Terry – The Nightingale by Kristin Hannah,** Published 2015. 438 pages, Fiction, WWII genre. The Nightingale tells the story of two French sisters who resist the occupying Nazi forces during WWII by hiding Jewish children and by leading the escape of Allied pilots whose planes have been shot down over France over the Pyrenees mountains into Spain.

Since their mother died when they were children, Vianne and Isabelle have always been at odds. Vianne, the older sister, is a rule-follower, whereas Isabelle is rebellious and speaks her mind. The Nazi invasion of France heightens these differences.

Vianne continues to follow the rules even when it means allowing a Nazi officer to live in her home. Isabelle refuses to live passively under German authority, joins the French resistance movement and begins guiding Allied airmen out of France after their planes are shot down. For her work, she adopts the codename the Nightingale.

4. **Louise McLean – Promise Me by Harlan Coben.** Published 2006. 370 pages. Mystery Thriller. Promise Me is a novel by Harlan Coben. It is the eighth novel in his series of a crime solver and sports agent named Myron Bolitar. The school year is almost over. Anxious families await word of college acceptances. In these last pressure-cooker months of high school, some kids will make the all-too-common and all-too-dangerous

mistake of drinking and driving. But Myron is determined to help keep his friends' children safe, and so he makes two neighborhood girls promise him: If they are ever in a bind but are afraid to call their parents, they must call him.

Several nights later, the call comes at 2:00 am, and true to his word, Myron picks up one of the girls in midtown Manhattan and drives her to a quiet cul-de-sac in New Jersey where she says her friend lives.

The next day, the girl's parents discover that their daughter is missing. And that Myron was the last person to see her. Desperate to fulfill a well-intentioned promise turned nightmarishly wrong, Myron races to find her before she's gone forever. But his past will not be buried so easily - for trouble has always stalked him, and his loved ones often suffer. Now Myron must decide once and for all who he is and what he will stand up for if he is to have any hope of saving a young girl's life.

5. **Norma Brodsky – A. Royal by Danielle Steel**, Published 2020. 288 pages.

In this spellbinding tale from Danielle Steel, a princess is sent away to safety during World War II, where she falls in love, and is lost forever.

B. How to Raise an Elephant by Alexander McCall Smith. Published 2020. Mystery. 256 pages.

Catch up on the latest from Mma Ramotswe, Mma Makutsi and other favourites in *How to Raise an Elephant*, the twenty-first volume of Alexander McCall Smith's beloved No 1 Ladies Detective Agency series.

They say it takes a village to raise a child, but can Mma Ramotswe and the rest of the No. 1 Ladies' Detective Agency team come together to raise a pipsqueak pachyderm? We may find out in this novel. We may not. Who can say?

6. **Carol Mattaino – Orphan Train by Christina Baker Kline**. Published 2013 in USA. 30. 4 pages Historical fiction.

It's the story of two women who build an unexpected friendship: a 91-year-old woman with a hidden past as an orphan-train rider and a troubled teen with one last chance at redemption. Set in present-day Maine and Depression-era Minnesota, *Orphan Train* highlights the real-life story of the trains that between 1854 and 1929 carried thousands of abandoned children from the East Coast to the Midwest. This novel trace the journey of Vivian Day, a 91-year-old woman, from a small village in Ireland to the crowded streets of the Lower East Side to the wide-open expanses of the Midwest to the coast of

Maine. Her life spans nearly a decade, encompassing great historical change and upheaval.

By the Author: “Many train riders were ashamed of this part of their past, and carried the secret of it for decades, and sometimes until they died. I think that the main message of my novel is that shame and secrecy can keep us from becoming our full selves. It’s not until we speak up that we can move past the pain and step forward.”

Set in present-day Maine and Depression-era Minnesota, Orphan Train highlights the real-life story of the trains that between 1854 and 1929 carried thousands of abandoned children from the East Coast to the Midwest.

7. **Karen Barnes – True North by Jill Ker Conway.** Published 1995. 250 pages. Conway’s *The Road from Coorain* presents a vivid memoir of coming of age in Australia. In 1960, however, she had reached the limits of that provincial--and irredeemably sexist--society and set off for America. *True North*--the testament of an extraordinary woman living in an extraordinary time--tells the profound story of the challenges that confronted Conway, as she sought to establish her public self.

8. **Barbara Brennan – The Spy and the Traitor by Ben McIntyre.** Published 2018. 384 pages

The celebrated author of *A Spy Among Friends* and *Rogue Heroes* returns with his greatest spy story yet, a thrilling Cold War-era tale of Oleg Gordievsky, the Russian whose secret work helped hasten the collapse of the Soviet Union.

If anyone could be considered a Russian counterpart to the infamous British double-agent Kim Philby, it was Oleg Gordievsky. The son of two KGB agents and the product of the best Soviet institutions, the savvy, sophisticated Gordievsky grew to see his nation's communism as both criminal and philistine. He took his first posting for Russian intelligence in 1968 and eventually became the Soviet Union's top man in London, but from 1973 on he was secretly working for MI6.

For nearly a decade, as the Cold War reached its twilight, Gordievsky helped the West turn the tables on the KGB, exposing Russian spies and helping to foil countless intelligence plots, as the Soviet leadership grew increasingly paranoid at the United States's nuclear first-strike capabilities and brought the world closer to the brink of war. Desperate to keep the circle of trust close, MI6 never revealed Gordievsky's name to its counterparts in the CIA, which in turn grew obsessed with figuring out the identity of Britain's obviously top-level source. Their obsession ultimately doomed Gordievsky: the

CIA officer assigned to identify him was none other than Aldrich Ames, the man who would become infamous for secretly spying for the Soviets.

Unfolding the delicious three-way gamesmanship between America, Britain, and the Soviet Union, and culminating in the gripping cinematic beat-by-beat of Gordievsky's nail-biting escape from Moscow in 1985, Ben Macintyre's latest may be his best yet. Like the greatest novels of John le Carré, it brings readers deep into a world of treachery and betrayal, where the lines bleed between the personal and the professional, and one man's hatred of communism had the power to change the future of nations.