



Books You Need to Read Together:

★ **Mrs. Dalloway** by Virginia Woolf, and, **The Hours** by Michael Cunningham

Why? *Mrs. Dalloway* is a luminous post WWI classic which is a partial inspiration for Michael

Cunningham's *The Hours*. His novel tells the story of three women: Virginia Woolf, beginning to write *Mrs. Dalloway* as she recuperates in a London suburb with her husband in 1923; Clarissa Vaughan, beloved friend of an acclaimed poet dying from AIDS, who in modern-day New York is planning a party in his honor; and Laura Brown, in a 1949 Los Angeles suburb, who slowly begins to feel the constraints of a perfect family and home. By the end of the novel, these three stories intertwine in remarkable ways, and finally come together in an act of subtle and haunting grace. *The Hours* is the winner of the 1999 Pulitzer Prize for Fiction.

★ **The Duke of Deception: Memories of My Father** by Geoffrey Wolff, and, **This Boy's Life: a Memoir** by Tobias Wolff

Why? After their parents separated, the literary brothers were raised in two different households; Geoffrey under his father's care and Tobias under his mother's. Both accounts are dramatic and moving.

★ **The Heart of Darkness** by Joseph Conrad, and, **Things Fall Apart** by Chinua Achebe

Why? *The Heart of Darkness* is a literary masterwork that takes the reader into the darker side of the Western Powers' Colonial exploitation of Africa. *Things Fall Apart* is another masterpiece which constitutes Chinua Achebe's response to *Conrad's*.

★ **A Movable Feast** by Ernest Hemingway, and, **Paris Wife** by Paula McLain

Why? *A Movable Feast* is Hemingway's paen to expatriate Paris and its charms in the 1920s as *he* experienced them; while *Paris Wife* is a novel whose fictional heroine, Hemingway's first wife Hadley, tells *her* story from the same time period.

★ **Pride and Prejudice** by Jane Austen, and, **Death Comes to Pemberly** by P.D. James

Why? Because *Pride and Prejudice* is one of the best novels in the history of novels, and *Death Comes to Pemberly* has all kinds of fun with Jane Austen's unique writing style. *Death Comes to Pemberly* is set a few years after Darcy and Elizabeth are happily settled at Pemberly. Then, author P.D. James pounces on their family peace by visiting a gruesome and mysterious murder upon proud Mr. Darcy's estate.

★ **Let the Great World Spin** by Colum McCann, and, **Man on Wire** by Philippe Petit

Why? Because in *Let the Great World Spin* Petit's epic wire walk is the center of McCann's brilliant evocation of the life of NYC in the mid-70's; yet readers don't actually hear much about the walk itself or how it came to be. For that, fortunately, we have Philippe Petit's extraordinary memoir *Man on Wire*.

★ **Lolita** by Vladimir Nabokov, and, **Reading Lolita in Tehran: a Memoir in Books** by Azar Nafisi

Why? Why was reading *Lolita* such a revolutionary act in late twentieth century Iran? To truly understand why, you'll need to read both books.

★ **Living Well is the Best Revenge** by Calvin Tompkins, and, **Tender is the Night** by F. Scott Fitzgerald

Why? In his enchanting memoir *Living Well is the Best Revenge*, Tompkins re-creates the privileged world of Gerald and Sara Murphy, two American originals who found themselves at the center of a charmed circle of artists and expatriate writers in France in the 1920s. Their home in Antibes, Villa America, served as a gathering place for Picasso and Léger as well as Hemingway and Fitzgerald, who used the glamorous couple as models for Dick and Nicole Diver in *Tender is the Night*.

★ **Caleb's Crossing**, and, **Changes in the Land: Indians, Colonists and the Ecology of New England** by William Cronon

Why? Geraldine Brooks takes a remarkable shard of history and brings it to vivid life in her novel *Caleb's Crossing*. In 1665, a young man from Martha's Vineyard became the first Native American to graduate from Harvard College. Upon this slender factual scaffold, Brooks built a compelling historical novel. To add some base level knowledge of the world in which her novel is set, read Cronon's *Changes in the Land: Indians, Colonists and the Ecology of New England*.

★ **Tweak: Growing Up on Methamphetamines** by Nic Sheff, and, **Beautiful boy: a Father's Journey through His Son's Addiction** by David Sheff.

Why? Because the son, Nic Sheff penned a harrowing memoir of life inside meth addition; then his father wrote his own memoir telling his side of the experience. Both are striking, intense and well-written narratives, together constituting a whole.

★ Gregory Maguire's **Wicked Years Series**, and, L. Frank Baum's **Wizard of Oz Series**

Why? Because many don't know that Baum wrote 14 Oz novels; all delightful fare for readers young and old:

The Wonderful Wizard of Oz; The Marvelous Land of Oz; Ozma of Oz; Dorothy and the Wizard in Oz; The Road to Oz; The Emerald City of Oz; The Patchwork Girl of Oz; Little Wizard Stories of Oz; Tik-Tok of Oz; The Scarecrow of Oz; Rinkitink in Oz; The Lost Princess of Oz; The Tin Woodman of Oz; The Magic of Oz, and, Glinda of Oz.

Once you've enjoyed one or more of the above, then you can have fun with novelist Gregory Maguire's revisionist take on Oz and its characters in his books: *Wicked: The Life and Times of the Wicked Witch of the West; Son of a Witch; A Lion Among Men*, and, *Out of Oz*.

★ **List created by Reference Staff at the Barrington Public Library - 4/12.**