ARRT Book Chat
October 1, 2020
Virtual Zoom Meeting

Due to COVID-19 and the change to everyone's work schedules and ability to meet in person, we are suspending the Narrative Nonfiction Genre Study and will relaunch it in the future when appropriate.

For now, ARRT wants to focus on stress relief, community, and readers advisory. We are hosting a BYOB (Bring Your Own Book) program. Participants can bring any title they would like to share with the group (any genre, fiction/nonfiction, media, etc.). Each participant will have 90 seconds to booktalk the appeal of the book.

What we read:

This Tender Land by William Kent Krueger: journey/adventure, coming of age, Minnesota 1932/Depression era setting, quirky characters, languid pace, lengthy, feels a little like Huck Finn or Dickens, good book for discussion/community read.

Seven Fallen Feathers: Racism, Death, and Hard Truths in a Northern City by Tanya Talaga: nonfiction, author is Native American, focus on damage done to Canadian First Nations and its legacy, racism, readable NF, good for book discussion, great audio narration.

To Have and Have Not by Ernest Hemingway: Depression era, fishing boat captain in Key West gets involved in black market, married couple is very loving/supportive, readable, but very racist and potentially problematic for many readers today.

A Deadly Education by Naomi Novik: magical boarding school that is deadly, first in a trilogy, dark fantasy/horror, diverse characters, excellent audio narration.

Defining Moments in Black History: Reading Between the Lies by Dick Gregory: NF, quick read, short essays, humorous, different view of history than traditional white-centered, timely but not "controversial," good for book discussion.

On Earth We Are Briefly Gorgeous by Ocean Vuong: auto-fiction (fictional based on author's life), supposed to be epistolary but just one very long letter, literary, poetic, lyrical, tightly written, amazing language, main character is gay Vietnamese man, bullying, war, domestic violence, explicit/difficult sex scene, provide trigger warning

Also try: *How We Fight For Our Lives* by Saeed Jones

Hench by Natalie Zina Walschots: data analyst temp for super villains who is injured on the job by a superhero, fun, open-ended, for fans of superhero stories/graphic novels or shows like Umbrella Academy (Netflix) or The Boys (Prime)

Song for a Whale by Lynne Kelly: juvenile fiction, main character is a deaf girl who goes on an adventure to try to help a whale who is unable to communicate with other whales

Deacon King Kong by James McBride: great storytelling, improbable but relatable story, big cast of characters, Brooklyn late 1960s setting, social upheaval, funny, poignant, delightful romp, audio narration is excellent with dialogue.

The Subtweet by Vivek Shraya: contemporary fiction, friendships, social media, professional jealousy, art and creative rights, short but many options for discussion.

The Case of the Missing Marquess (Enola Holmes mystery series) by Nancy Springer: juvenile mystery series, basis for new Netflix movie, great historical detail, excellent option for Sherlock Holmes and/or historical mystery fans.

The Word is Murder by Anthony Horowitz: fun mix of "memoir" and mystery, good choice for fans of Sherlock Holmes, first in series.

Mexican Gothic by Silvia Moreno-Garcia: atmospheric, gothic horror, big twist, creepy

Radical Compassion: Learning to Love Yourself and Your World with the Practice of RAIN by Tara Brach: nonfiction, self-help

Also try: *You Belong* by Sebene Selassie

Transcendent Kingdom by Yaa Gyasi: contemporary family story, immigrant family, young woman in medical school studying addiction, easy to read/follow, dark but hopeful, very good for discussion.

Boyfriend Material by Alexis Hall: contemporary romance, "bad boy" uses fake relationship with "good boy" to improve his image and the two fall in love, sweet, funny, Bridget Jones feel with quirky friends, Mark Darcy-like character, not very steamy.

Anxious People by Fredrick Backman: lots of characters and plot lines back and forth, but all tied together in the end, suicide, mental illness, no shame over mental illness, everyone is dealing with their own issues that you might not see, positive/hopeful message

Also try: *Midnight Library* by Matt Haig: attempted suicide, multiverse, beautifully written, positive message.

Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents by Isabel Wilkerson: NF, more readable than Warmth of Other Suns, good for people who aren't ready for anti-racism titles.