



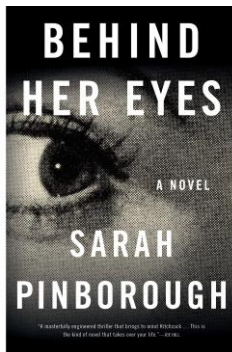
The book clubs really enjoyed 11/22/63. There was a mix of people who are big Stephen King fans, as well as some who had never read a Stephen King book, and despite the behemoth length almost everyone finished it before the meeting! We agreed that Stephen King is in need of an editor who will cut through his story ruthlessly to get to the good parts, and that the ending we came up with as a group was far better than the official ending in the book and the unofficial alternate ending he wrote and posted online. The concept for the book was really interesting and we learned a lot about a major historical event.

11/22/63 is a different genre than most Stephen King books and while some of us missed the “spooky” aspect that he is known for, it was still really enjoyable. We think this book is a great introduction for people who have never read Stephen King, and that old fans of King will love the interwoven stories from his other books. We’d also urge people to remember that Stephen King’s books are about the journey... not necessarily the ending.



Behind Her Eyes

By Sarah Pinborough



Louise is a single mom, a secretary, stuck in a modern-day rut. On a rare night out, she meets a man in a bar and sparks fly. Though he leaves after they kiss, she's thrilled she finally connected with someone. In *Behind Her Eyes*, Sarah Pinborough has written a novel that takes the modern day love triangle and not only turns it on its head, but completely reinvents it in a way that will leave readers reeling. Marketed as a thriller, but the group felt that it did not meet that description. The woman in this book felt like “accessories”, even though they are the main characters.

The book club did not love this book and described it as a red herring with no plot. As Becca said, “The book fell on its face in the bottom of a pit.”



We have a copy of this book in our lending library at the Chappelle Gardens Residents Association so please come take a copy and find out for yourself if this book deserves more stars.

Bird Box

By Josh Malerman



Great read for the SPOOKY season upon us! Bird Box technically, is an easy read. However, the story itself is pretty original, and things unfold for you in a pleasing manner. I don't want to give much away, but you swap between two timelines that essentially meet up, starting with the present and swapping to the past, before the world as we know it ended. It was an engaging read, over fast than we expected, though we were slightly disappointed by the ending.

Bird Box is well written, and definitely made us wonder how we would handle the situation and challenges the characters face. There's lots of emotion balanced with suspense and thrill/action scenes. The sense of fear is palpable.

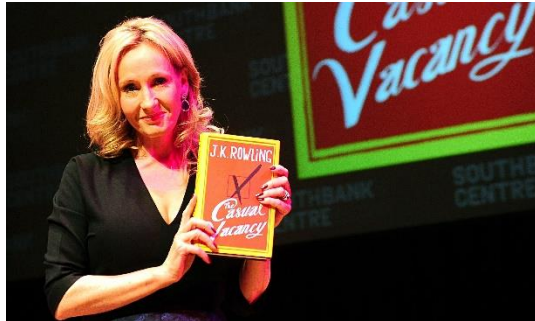


We have a copy of this book in our lending library at the Chappelle Gardens Residents Association so please come take a copy and find out for yourself what the **Bird Box** is all about.

The Chappelle Gardens Better book club meets again on October 24th at 8pm and we will be reviewing **Let You Go** by Clare Mackintosh.

Casual Vacancy

By JK Rowling



'The Casual Vacancy' is J.K. Rowling's first adult fiction novel. It deals, at the heart of the plot line, with the political life of a small town. The story begins with a character's sudden death and what unfolds are the stories of those left to pick up the pieces. In a town where seemingly everyone knows everything about their neighbour, the secrets of the people of Pagford slowly start to creep out after the death of a council member.

Rowling weaves more than ten plots throughout the novel. There are many characters to keep track of and many themes to think about while reading this novel. There are many British-isms throughout the novel. Rowling seems to utilize violence, sex, and swearing as a way to further distinguish the caste system in this town. It is a novel of rich vs poor, old vs new, and parents vs children.

Although many of us had high hopes for this read, due to our love of the (ABSOLUTELY AMAZING) Harry Potter series, we struggled with our rating of this novel. In the end, we settled on 3 out of 5 stars. Some thoughts that were considered were:

"I was expecting it to be so much worse"

"I am in the middle of another book...I can't wait to get back to that one"

"It definitely got better once you got past the boring first part"

"It started getting interesting after the first hundred pages"

We do recommend the book, as J.K. Rowling is an incredible author...just don't go into the story with her as the author in your mind (if you're a Potter fan), think of her as a run-of-the-mill British author and you'll be fine!



Our next read is Church of Marvels by Leslie Parry. We will be meeting [on May 23rd](#) at 7pm.

Caught

By Lisa Moore



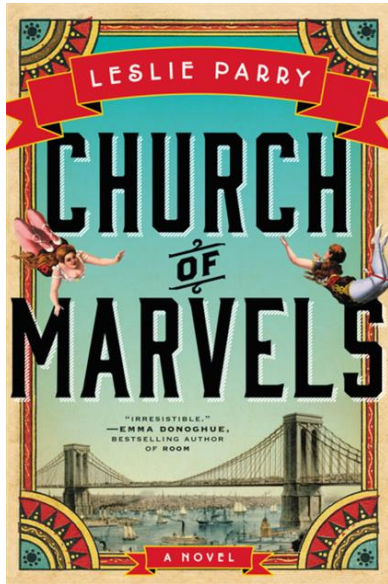
Slaney, our Newfoundland-born pot-smuggling protagonist, breaks out of a Nova Scotia prison and sets out on a journey that has potential to end in disaster around every corner. The repetitious-like writing makes for a drawn out read in which Slaney's former and future partner in crime, Hearn, are banking on the second time's the charm with their big deal gone wrong; bringing a boatload of Columbian pot to Canada. The book is witty, but the book club struggled with how drawn out and bogged down the back story was. Could be a better short story versus a novel.

We gave it a 2.25 out of 5 stars

Our next book club meets on July 25th at 8pm and we will be reviewing ***It Ends With Us*** by Colleen Hoover

Church of Marvels

By Leslie Parry



We all had a difficult time getting into the book, and would have been best to have completed in one sitting. There is a lot of flashbacks and it is easy to get confused. The story takes place in New York in the late 1800's. It has a very dark plot that connects four different characters that are involved with opium dens, circus performers, insane asylum and amateur boxing.

This book is a strange and eerie dream with lots of haunting twists and intertwined points of view. A good onion book!

We gave it a 3 out of 5 stars



Our next book for June 27th at 7pm is *The Nest* by March 14th at 7pm is ***The Nest*** by Cynthia D'Aprix Sweeney

Girl on the Train

By Paula Hawkins



Rachel is a wreck and she seeks solace in gin and wine... it's difficult to say too much about the plot of ***The Girl on The Train***; like all thrillers, it's best for readers to dive in spoiler-free. This book is a gripping novel where Hawkins' has a remarkable understanding of the limits of human knowledge, and the degree to which memory and imagination can become confused.

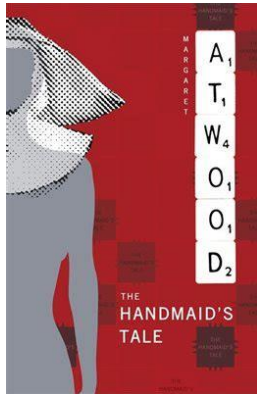
The Chappelle Gardens book club would recommend this book and it does bring enough curiosity and commitment to completing the book to the end. Not the best thriller we have read and the main character can make you squirm at times. A natural fit for fans of *Gone Girl*-style unreliable narrators and twisty, fast moving plots.



Our next book for August is ***Bear and the Nightingale*** by Katherine Arden

The Handmaid's Tale

By Margaret Atwood



Overall everyone enjoyed the book. The book is set in an alternate, dystopian future that is limited mostly to the USA. It's an eye-opener and relevant to our society today, which makes it a bit scary because we could all see the events of the book as plausible. Something that really shocked us was the realization that the events that leads the USA to become a mandatory religious state based on modesty, patriarchy, and severe social classes feel like they could be starting or happening right now - unchecked power paired with opportunity in the hands of the wrong people could easily lead us into a situation like this one.

We consider this a must-read - while the writing style of the story is not everyone's cup of tea, the story itself is amazing and the message is ultimately incredibly important. This is a book that really makes you think, with some messed-up happenings and "a whole lot of feels." One of our members gifts this book to women in her life regularly, and we can see why!

Our overall rating was 4/5 stars



We have a copy of this book in our lending library at the Chappelle Gardens Residents Association so please come take a copy and find out for yourself what Big Little Lies is all about.

Our next book club is September 26th at 8pm. We will be reviewing ***Bird Box*** by Josh Malerman

Perfume

By Patrick Suskind



In the slums of eighteenth-century France, and acclaimed bestseller and classic novel the provokes a terrifying examination of one man's indulgence in his greatest passion – sense of smell – leads to murder.

The book club thought this was a very interesting and dark read that had masterful descriptions of perfume and scents of all kinds. Very interesting character development and the theme of the central subject of perfume is unexpected and fresh. One of our book club members had read this book at least 20 times over the past 15 years and inspired the group to have appreciation for this book.

3.5 out of 5 stars

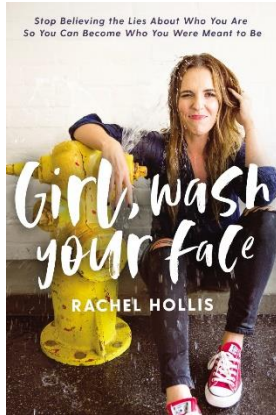


We have a copy of this book in our lending library at the Chappelle Gardens Residents Association so please come take a copy and find out for yourself what Big Little Lies is all about.

Our next book for June 27th at 8pm is ***Caught*** by Lisa Moore

Girl, Wash Your Face

By Rachel Hollis



One of our most lively and longest discussions at any of our book clubs... *Girl, Wash Your Face* by Rachel Hollis is a biography/self help/advice book where in each chapter, Rachel starts with a lie you tell yourself. Rachel offers life advice and her truths by giving examples of her real life experiences. The book club found that was isn't enough depth or back stories to fully understand, and there are some contradictions. The vulnerability and honesty Rachel expresses is relatable, but can also come across as too saccharine (thank you to Dana and Tracy for this new word).

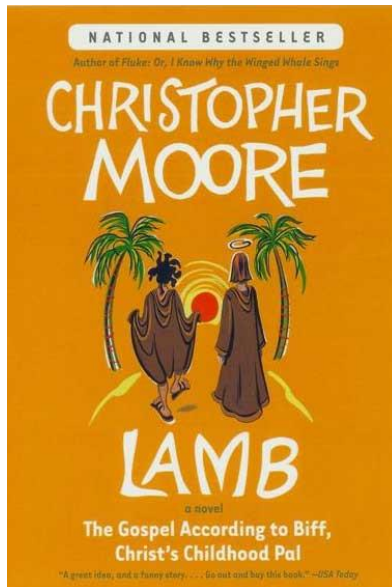
We all agreed that we would recommend this book and there are parts that we could relate to and find truth in. No matter what stage of your life you are in, there is something to take from Rachel's journey and honesty.



Our next book for May reviews is 'Perfume' by Patrick Suskind. We are planning to meet May 23rd at 8pm.

Lamb

By Christopher Moore



Overall, we really enjoyed this book. The retelling of Jesus' story with focus on his childhood and teenage years fit within the Bible as it is, and brought in some new ideas about how Jesus came to be, as well as framing the story within a historical narrative. We found the story seemed to be split into three main parts - the beginning and development of friendship between Joshua and Biff, the middle and exploration of Joshua as he tries to discover what being the Messiah means, and the end. Our favourite parts were the beginning and middle - we found the end left something to be desired, not because of the loss of Joshua, but in the resolution of Biff's story.

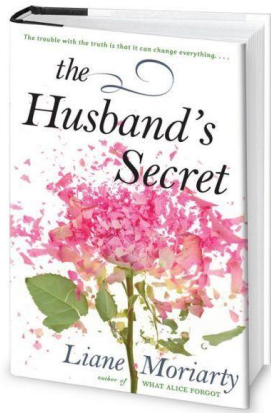
We think this was a great read and had some touching moments, good chuckles, and a new and relatable perspective on the Bible. This book would be best enjoyed by mature audiences (it's definitely not for kids, but requires a sense of humour!) and those who are open-minded to new theories about religion. We gave this a rating of 3.5/5.



Our next books for March is ***The Husbands Secret* by Liane Moriarty**

The Husbands Secret

By Liane Moriarty



We all agreed that this was a really great book club read because it had a lot of talking points and interesting observations, so led to some great discussion. This would be a great vacation book, a lot of us thought it would be the perfect read for sitting on the beach or while traveling because it's engaging enough to keep your attention, but not too heavy. There are a great plot and a lot of drama, with some interesting characters that we both loved and hated. We feel that a lot of people, women especially, could relate or imagine themselves in the situations of some of the characters. We gave this book a 3/5 and would suggest it as another read for anyone who enjoyed Big Little Lies, as well.



We have a copy of this book in our lending library at the Chappelle Gardens Residents Association so please come take a copy and find out for yourself what the Husbands Secret is all about.

Our next book club meet up is April 17th at 8pm and we will be reviewing ***Girl, Wash Your Face*** by Rachel Hollis.

The Alice Network

By Kate Quinn



BOOK REVIEW

This novel is an exciting tale of two different eras twisted together to produce an exhilarating read. The reader is introduced to WWI spy Eve who later (after WWII) finds herself aiding a young girl, Charlie, with a mission to find a missing person. These two women find that their stories intertwine in more ways than expected and together are able to find their version of a happy ending.

This excellent novel is a quick read. It is full of moral dilemmas that will have the reading on edge. Full of incredible characters that you will both love and hate, there is not a single chapter that leaves you wanting.

We gave *The Alice Network* an unanimous [5/5](#).



Our next book club novel will be *Big Little Lies* by Liane Moriarty. We will meet to discuss it [on February 7, 2018](#).

The Bear and the Nightingale

By Katherine Arden



The Bear and the Nightingale is based on a Russian fable set in the 14th Century. We would recommend this book. It is very different than the Anglo-American fantasy novel. **A haunting story**; one so deeply atmospheric that you can almost feel the cold air on your skin as you're reading.

We gave this book a 4 out of 5 stars!



We have a copy of this book in our lending library at the Chappelle Gardens Residents Association so please come take a copy and find out for yourself what Big Little Lies is all about.

Our next book club meet up is September 26th at 7pm. We will be reviewing ***The Good Widow*** by Liz Fenton

The Good Widow

By Liz Fenton & Lisa Steinke



When Jacqueline Morales is informed that her husband has died in Maui, she is shocked and dismayed as you would think a new widow would be. But when she learns that her husband was not only in Hawaii as opposed to Kansas where he said he was going on business, but he was not alone. Enjoyable whodunnits. Lots of twists & turns with unexpected ending. Not the twisty/thriller expected, and the description can drag on.

This book we would recommend when you need an easy read that you don't need to over think too much. A great travelling or beach book that will keep you intrigued to finish to the end.



We have a copy of this book in our lending library at the Chappelle Gardens Residents Association so please come take a copy and find out for yourself what the ***The Good Widow*** is all about.

The Chappelle Gardens Better book club meets again on October 24th at 7pm and we will be reviewing ***Behind Her Eyes*** by Sarah Pinborough.

The Nest

By Cynthia D'Aprix Sweeney



Every family has its problems. But even among the most troubled, the Plumb family stands out as spectacularly dysfunctional. Years of simmering tensions finally reach a breaking point as they confront their charismatic and reckless older brother, Leo, freshly released from rehab. The book club struggled with this book as it dragged on without much depth or likeability in the characters. The characters were very stereotypical and cliché. Most of us finished the book, but would struggle to recommend it.

Our next book club meets on July 25th at 7pm and we will be reviewing ***Girl on the Train*** by Paula Hawkins