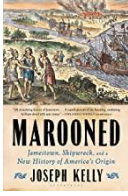
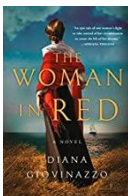


Marblehead League Book Discussion Group

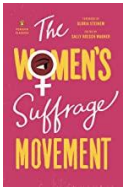
The League of Women Voters of Marblehead recently held its May book discussion group. Attendees shared summaries of books they have been reading.



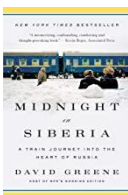
1. “Marooned: Jamestown, Shipwreck, and a New History of America’s Origin” (2018) by Joseph Kelly The author revisits the Jamestown story and finds surprising insights that relate to the founding principles of this country.



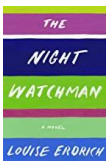
2. “The Woman in Red” (available Aug. 2020) by Diana Giovanazzo. This is historical fiction about Anita Garibaldi, a freedom fighter in Brazil in the 1830s. Our reader said it was frothy and fun.



3. “The Women’s Suffrage Movement” (2020) by Sally Roesch Wagner and Gloria Steinem. An anthology of women who took part in the suffrage movement, both known and those often left out.

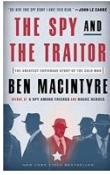


4. “Midnight in Siberia A Train Journey into the Heart of Russia” (2015) by David Greene. A wonderful travel narrative of trans-Siberia railroad trip across Russia, beginning in Moscow. Author David Greene is an NPR reporter on the Moscow desk. The book chronicles the insights he gains about this vast country through interactions with the people along the way.

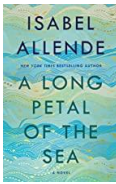


5. “The Night Watchman” (2020) by Louise Erdrich The author writes a historical fictionalized account of her grandfather’s experience as a member of the Chippewa Council in North Dakota, delving into the government’s attempt to invalidate treaties and confiscate the land

of native Americans in 1953. Life on the Chippewa reservation serves as backdrop, where many seek to leave to be free of the poverty. Highly recommended!



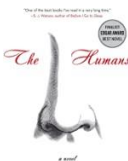
6. “The Spy and the Traitor: The Greatest Espionage Story of the Cold War”(2019) by Ben Macintyre This is the true story of espionage by a Russian named Oleg Gordievsky, who served the USSR posted in London but became a double agent. Working for MI6 during the cold war, his knowledge and what he shared with the British and U.S. prevented a nuclear war and paved the way for a meeting between Thatcher and Gorbachev. A true thriller!



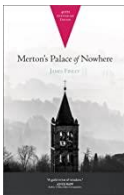
7. “A Long Petal of the Sea: A Novel” (2020) by Isabel Allende This novel of historical fiction tells the story of those fleeing the Spanish Revolution, repression and fascism in Franco’s Spain the 1930s, their escape to Chile, and the journey to find home.



8. “The Untold Story if Women of Color in the League of Women Voters” (2020) by Carolyn Jefferson-Jenkins. The author Dr. Jenkins is a former national President of the League of Women Voters of the United States who writes based on her years of research and interviews.



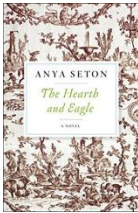
9. “The Humans: A Novel” (2014) by Matt Haig An alien must take a human form and learns what it means to be human- a fantastical premise with hilarious examination of human behavior from the outside (alien) perspective. Entertaining and fun!



10. “Merton's Palace of Nowhere” (2003)_by James Finley. The book explores the author’s spiritual quest, experiences and insights under the guidance of the great contemplative Thomas Merton, including concepts of the soul vs. personality, and false self vs. true self. An antidote for trying times!



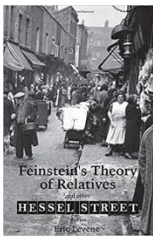
11. “The Spanish Flu Epidemic and its Influence on History” (2019) by Jaime Breitnauer
The author tells the story of the Spanish flu that broke out during World War 1 and the responses of countries that mimic those of today.



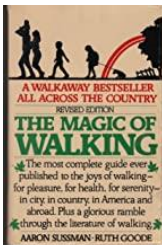
12. “The Hearth and Eagle: A Novel” (1948) by Anya Seton A fictionalized account taking place in Marblehead MA, inspired by examination of the author’s own family history. The book is peppered with well-known Marblehead names and places that our reader enjoyed. It reminded her why she loves Marblehead!



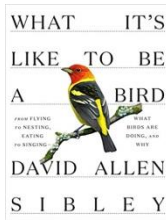
13. “The Splendid and the Vile: A Saga of Churchill, Family, and Defiance During the Blitz” (2020) Erik Larson This novel takes the reader inside the story of Churchill and his leadership during one of the darkest hours of history. The author shares vignettes from Churchill’s life including his interactions with Roosevelt. Highly recommended!



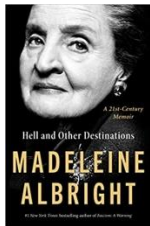
14. “Feinstein's Theory of Relatives: and Other Hessel Street Stories” (2017) by Eric Levene This set of humorous short stories is loosely based on the author’s recollections of the 40s and 50s in London’s Jewish East End. Jewish immigrants settled around Hessel Street-- opening markets, bakeries and butcher shops beginning in the 1930s.



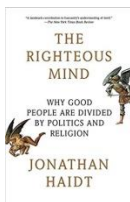
15. “The Magic of Walking” (1967) by Aaron Sussman and Ruth Goode (1967) Our reader says this is a complete guide to the pleasures of walking. It includes excerpts from literature about the physical and psychological joys of walking. Highly recommended!



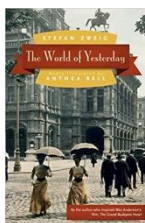
16. “What It's Like to Be a Bird: From Flying to Nesting, Eating to Singing--What Birds Are Doing, and Why” (2020) by David Allen Sibley The author is best known for his exceptional field guides, but here discusses little known facts and misunderstandings about why birds behave as they do. Are robins really listening for worms? Why were feathers used as quill pens? The book will delight experts and non-experts alike.



17. “Hell and Other Destinations: A 21st Century Memoir” (2020) by Madeleine Albright What do you do with the rest of your life after eight years as Secretary of State at age 64? Madeleine Albright’s answer is to make a list, then do it all!



18. “The Righteous Mind: Why Good People Are Divided by Politics and Religion” (2013) by Jonathan Haidt This book, written by a moral psychologist, explores how humans make judgements about the world and the differing values that can determine which side of politics you choose, coloring every political argument. The author ties moral psychology to evolutionary psychology. It is slow and deep reading but worth it, according to numerous readers!



19. “The World of Yesterday” (2013 translation of 1942 book) by Stefan Zweig This is an autobiography by Zweig, a talented Jewish writer born and raised in Vienna. The book chronicles his childhood in Vienna at the turn of the century, and the cosmopolitan freedoms of European culture. Later, he describes a society grappling with a lost war (WWI) and lurching into the maw the second (WWII). Its gentle lucid writing contrasts with the external spasms of mankind at its worst. At its core is the story of an enlightened man who has lost everything yet trying to make sense of the world. It can be read today as a cautionary tale that whatever you think is permanent in this life, is not.

The League of Women Voters is non-partisan with respect to candidates and political parties. Formed in 1920 and dedicated to the principles of self-government established by the Constitution of the United States, the League works to promote political responsibility through informed and active participation of citizens in government. Membership is open to all.

Submitted by Kathy Leonardson
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