

MODERN MRS DARCY *Book Club*

SPRING 2021

Spring is a time of growth and renewal. Here in the MMD Book Club, we're always excited to explore and discuss new aspects of our reading lives. Part of the reading life that interests so many of *you* is the writing. This spring season, we're focusing on writers, the craft of writing, and writing as it appears in the novels we love. I hope you'll love it. Readers, let's get to it!

March



Main Selection: ***Their Eyes Were Watching God*** by Zora Neale Hurston
Flight Pick: ***Dust Tracks on a Road*** by Zora Neale Hurston

We've received SO MANY requests over the years to read Zora Neale Hurston, and this month we're excited to finally read TWO of her works! This evocative story about expectations, marriage, and unexpected love is richly atmospheric, set in the Deep South's Florida Everglades in the 1920s. A classic for a reason, with well-developed characters and a thought-provoking story line.

We're pairing this with Hurston's candid, poignant, and FUNNY 1942 memoir that offers a glimpse into the public and private life of one of the century's most beloved and influential literary icons. A pleasure to read, and one that offers fascinating insight into the woman behind the work, as well as the writing process of our main selection. Audiophile alert: Hurston's work is incredible on audio.

April



Main Selection: ***Writers and Lovers*** by Lily King
Flight Pick: ***Bird by Bird*** by Anne Lamott

Speaking of the writing process: a young writer turns her life around in this 2020 novel from the author of *Euphoria*. Casey Peabody's life is a catastrophe: she's grieving her mother, buried in debt, floundering in her love life, and fed up with waiting tables while she labors to finish the novel she's been working on for six years. But change is coming. A story of growing up, finding love, grieving loss, and a tribute to the writing life, with one of the most exuberant, satisfying endings I've ever read.

We're pairing this with a book about the writing life and life itself: Anne Lamott's modern classic is a staple on writers' bookshelves and one to read over and over again—whether you love to write or simply love to read.

May



Main Selection: ***The Downstairs Girl*** by Stacey Lee
No flight pick for May

We're continuing our YA-in-May tradition with Stacey Lee's newest historical novel, set in Gilded Age Atlanta. The story begins with a firing: Jo Kuan is devastated to lose her prized job at the milliner's for being a "saucebox." (Sassy heroine alert!) But then an unexpected opportunity presents itself: under the cloak of anonymity, Jo begins writing an advice column called "Dear Miss Sweetie" in the local paper, and soon enough Jo's feisty opinions are the talk of the town. But Jo lives and writes with the ever-present fear of being unmasked—plus the escalating threats to her family's situation. If you enjoy a character you can root for and a seamless blend of historical fact with compelling fiction, you're going to *love* this book.

We don't select flight picks for May through August because we're swimming in Summer Reading Guide picks. Rest assured, we'll put plenty of great reads on your radar for this season!

It is so good to be among people who are reading—and we can't wait to read and discuss these books with you. Happy reading, friends! - Anne