

Boston Book Club

Reading is the great escape—through reading, we intensify our capacity for pleasure, for sympathy, and for comprehension. What we read utterly changes our relation to the world. There is a thirst in all readers for stories that teach us about the world and ourselves."

—Laura Furman & Elinore Standard

Oprah popularized them, and the Metro D.C. Connection put the Swarthmore alumni imprimatur upon them last year. Now it's time to bring a book group to Boston.

We will read a book a month, for five months, using a reading list and guiding questions compiled by English Department faculty member Frank K. Saragosa. The theme of this year's reading list will be "The Asian Diaspora." The book list is as follows:

January	<i>Disappearing Moon Café</i> , by Sky Lee
February	<i>Pale View of the Hills</i> , by Kazuo Ishiguro
March	<i>Obasan</i> , by Joy Kogawa
April	<i>Floating World</i> , by Cynthia Kadohata
May	<i>Meatless Days</i> , by Sara Suleri
June	<i>Monkey Bridge</i> , by Lan Cao

These texts are all about Asians who have moved to the West. Professor Saragosa, who will join us in June for a culminating discussion of the texts, has opted to focus on Asian-Canadian and Anglo-Asian literature to investigate the circumstances of race and immigration in the United States, and to examine what is common among the experiences of Asian immigrants in the English-speaking world.

The first book group meeting will be on Thursday, January 21, at 7 p.m., at the Central Square Branch of the Cambridge Public Library, 45 Pearl Street, two blocks east of Massachusetts Avenue. It is easily T-accessible, and there is a parking garage right next to the library. The text for this meeting will be *Disappearing Moon Café*, by Sky Lee. The dates of future meetings will be devised on January 21. Depending on the degree of interest, several reading groups, meeting on different evenings, might be formed.

Please respond as soon as possible to Sanda Balaban '94 by phone at (617) 497-8336 or by e-mail at . If you are interested, but unable to attend the January 21 kickoff event, please leave word accordingly, and indicate the best time (in terms of day of the week, and time of evening) for you to attend future meetings. Only those who reply will be included in subsequent mailings about the book group.

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Subject: Boston Connection Book Group

Date: Tue, 26 Jan 1999 00:59:07 EST

From:

To:

CC:

Dear book-lovin' Swatties--

Thanks so much to all of you who attended the kickoff of the Boston Connection book group last Thursday evening. It was a wonderfully rich discussion, and each attendee made meaningful contributions to the conversation.

For those of you who were not able to join us last Thursday but have expressed interest in being a part of the group (the CC:s in this header), I am pleased to report that we were able to end the evening on a truly Swattie note: by coming to a Quaker consensus on a date for next month's meeting. We hope that as many others of you as are interested and able will join us on the chosen evening as well.

The next book group will meet on Thursday, February 25 at 7:00 pm, and will be hosted at the home of Sylvia Schoenbaum, at 18 Osborne Road in Brookline (easily accessible by T, located just off the Green Line B at the Babcock stop. We will email more explicit directions for drivers as the date approaches.) We will read *Pale View of the Hills* by Kazuo Ishiguro. Last week, the group agreed that it would be useful to have Professor Saragosa's Background Notes & Discussion Questions in advance of the meeting, and so I will send them to you via email within the next two weeks.

Thanks again for your participation, and happy reading!

Sanda Balaban