

AUC Book Club Roster 2024-2025

November 19th *Anxious People*, by Fredrik Backman (352 pp) (Writer of ‘The Man Called Ove’) A poignant comedy about a crime that never took place, a would-be bank robber who disappears into thin air, and eight extremely anxious strangers who find they have more in common than they ever imagined. (Fiction) *recommended by Helen Roberts*

December 17th *The Women*, by Kristen Hannah (480 pp). *Women can be heroes.* When twenty-year-old nursing student Frances ‘Frankie’ McGrath hears these words, it is a revelation. Raised in the sun-drenched, idyllic world of Southern California and sheltered by her conservative parents, she has always prided herself on doing the right thing. But in 1965, the world is changing, and she suddenly dares to imagine a different future for herself. When her brother ships out to serve in Vietnam, she joins the Army Nurse Corps and follows his path. (Fiction) *recommended by Marilyn Patterson.*

January 21st, 2025 *The Frozen River*, by Ariel Lawhon (688 pp) A gripping historical mystery inspired by the life and diary of Martha Ballard, a renowned 18th-century midwife who defied the legal system and wrote herself into American history. (Historical Fiction) *recommend by Linda Kuhn.*

February 18th *The North Star: Canada and the Civil War Plots Against Lincoln*, by Julien Sher (352 pp) Canadians take pride in being on the ‘good side’ of the American Civil War, serving as haven for 30,000 escaped slaves on the Underground Railroad. But dwelling in history’s shadow is the much darker role Canada played in supporting the slave South and in fomenting the many plots against Lincoln. (Non-fiction) *recommend by Linda Longhurst.*

March 18th Dominion: The Railway and the Rise of Canada by Stephen Bown (416 pp) The sharp decline of the demand for fur in the late nineteenth century could have spelled economic disaster for the venerable Hudson's Bay Company. But an idea emerged in political and business circles in Ottawa and Montreal to connect the disparate British colonies into a single entity that would stretch from the Atlantic to the Pacific. The times were marked by greed, hubris, blatant empire building, oppression, corruption and theft. They were good for some, hard for most, disastrous for others. The CPR enabled a new country, but it came at a terrible price. (Non-fiction) *recommended by Bill Newman.*

April 15th Under Development: A Journey Without Maps, by Ian Smillie (294 pp) This is a memoir about development: personal development, the development of ideas and understanding, rights and justice, war and peace, poverty and prosperity. It's about one of the greatest imperatives of our time: the drive to end global poverty and why, despite exaggerated claims to the contrary, it isn't working. (Non-fiction) *recommended by Charles Truax.*

May 20th There Is No Ethan: How Three Women Caught America's Biggest Catfish by Anna Akbari (288 pp) Part memoir, part explosive window into the mind of a catfisher, a thrilling personal account of three women coming face-to-face with an internet predator and teaming up to expose them. (Non-fiction) *recommended by Barb York.*

June 17th The Phoenix Crown, by Janie Chang and Kate Quinn (400 pp) San Francisco, 1906. In a city bustling with newly minted millionaires and scheming upstarts, two very different women hope to change their fortunes. A narrative about the intertwined lives of two strong wronged women, spanning from the chaos of the San Francisco earthquake to the glittering palaces of Versailles. (Fiction) *recommended by Paula Hanna.*