



FOXWOOD VILLAGE BOOK CLUB

Dear Neighbors!

Spring is here and every one of us is going to feel better and happier because of sunshine and beauty in the air. Our winter novel we discussed in our February meeting was "Joy Luck Club" by Amy Tan. Published in 1989. She was one of the first authors who used the Chinese immigrant experience in the land of opportunities as historical, human and personal background for her novels. Her own mother left children behind in China and she works this heartbreaking decision and the trip with her mother to China to meet her siblings into this novel. Her second novel called "The Kitchen God's wife" delves deeper into the relationship between mothers and daughters. The theme of the novel gave our discussion a personal note.

Our new novel is "March" by Geraldine Brooks. Ms. Brooks takes Mr. March, the mostly absent father of the "Little Women" novel into the South and the Civil War. She stated "I made a fast rule for myself that I would only go where Louisa May Alcott had chosen not to go". The novel received the Pulitzer Prize and gives a history lesson on slavery, abolitionists, contrabands and the Civil War horrors and sufferings.

Angela:

I am new to the book club and I am enjoying it very much. I always have a tendency to read books by the same two or three authors and now the book club is expanding my horizons. The book club now introduced me to "Joy Luck Club" which I found interesting for two reasons. One was the culture and problems of the Chinese immigrant and the second was mother - daughter relationships. It opened us up to the culture and hardships of four Chinese women in China and then the problems they have accepting the American ways of their first generation daughters. But for me, I found the story of the relationship between the daughters and their mothers most relevant. I thought of my mother, grandmother and my daughter while reading their stories. In the book, the mothers all realized how their behavior and attitudes influenced who their daughters were. It told of how they sacrificed and wanted what was best for their daughters. My Mom now has Alzheimer's, so reading this was so pertinent for me. I realized how much like my mother I am. I learned gentleness and independence from her and I saw how I passed these qualities on to my daughter. "Joy Luck Club" is a story of Chinese culture but it is also a universal story of women, friendship, and mother-daughter relationships.

Betty:

Ms. Tan writes an engaging story of emigrant women from China and how their coping with keeping of the old ways and adjusting to the new. She also focused on their daughters and how they also had to try to respect the old and bridge the chasm between the Asian and American culture. I feel most children of emigrant parents can relate to the story. One thought kept passing through my mind while reading. We have our "Steel Magnolias" China has its Steel Lotus Blossoms.

Diane:

The Joy Luck Club was an interesting novel about Chinese mothers & daughters and the problems that arise as daughters are "Americanized" and shun their mother's old ways and cultural taboos. I enjoyed it very much on many levels the old can learn from the young and vice-versa.

Please join us. Ilse Kaminski (208-8060)

"You're never alone when you're reading a book." Susan Wiggs