

**Great Books For Your Book Group**  
**Non-Fiction**  
**Suggestions From the Librarians at the Milford Public Library**

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**Abu-Jaber, Diana - The Language of Baklava - BIOGRAPHY ABU-JABER - 352 pages**

Diana Abu-Jaber weaves the story of her life in upstate New York and in Jordan around vividly remembered meals: everything from Lake Ontario shish kabob cookouts with her Arab-American cousins to goat stew feasts under a Bedouin tent in the desert. These sensuously evoked meals in turn illuminate the two cultures of Diana's childhood-American and Jordanian-and the richness and difficulty of straddling both.



**Angelou, Maya - I Know Why The Caged Bird Sings - BIOGRAPHY ANGELOU - 281 pages**

Sent at a young age to live with her grandmother in Arkansas, Angelou learned a great deal from this exceptional woman and the tightly knit black community there. These very lessons carried her throughout the hardships she endured later in life, including a tragic occurrence while visiting her mother in St. Louis and her formative years spent in California--where an unwanted pregnancy changed her life forever.



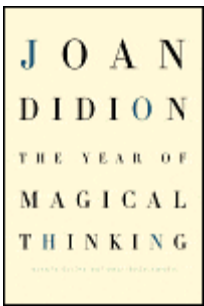
**Niven, Jennifer - Ada Blackjack: A True Story Of Survival In The Arctic - BIOGRAPHY BLACKJACK - 431 pages**

In 1921, four men and one woman ventured deep into the Arctic. Two years later, only one returned. When 23-year-old Inuit Ada Blackjack signed on as a seamstress for a top-secret Arctic expedition, her goal was simple: earn money and find a husband. But her terrifying experiences – both in the wild and back in civilization – comprise one of the most amazing untold adventures of the 20th century.



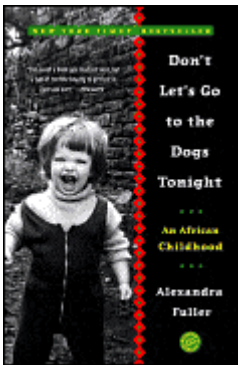
**Collins, David - My Louise - BIOGRAPHY COLLINS - 160 pages**

At the age of 34, while seven months pregnant with her first child, Louise Mooney Collins first discovered the breast cancer that would forever alter the lives of Louise, her husband David, and the daughter who would soon arrive to join their harrowing struggle—one that ultimately ended with Louise's death nearly three years later. From those experiences and his ensuing grief, and from recollections of the couple's love affair and journeys into his deeper past, Detroit-area author Collins has created this hauntingly beautiful memoir.



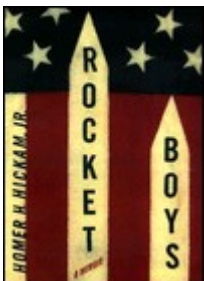
**Didion, Joan** - The Year of Magical Thinking - BIOGRAPHY DIDION - 227 pages

During the Christmas holidays in 2003, novelist Joan Didion began a month of hell. Just a few days before Christmas, Didion and her husband of 40 years, John Gregory Dunne, watched helplessly as their newly married daughter, Quintana, came down with what seemed to be the flu, then contracted pneumonia, which led, within days, to complete septic shock and system breakdown. A week later, as Quintana hovered close to death, Dunne collapsed and died. Didion plunged into a mad state of "magical thinking." Her response was unfathomable: "We might expect that we will be prostrate, inconsolable, crazy with loss. We do not expect to be literally crazy, cool customers who believe that their husband is about to return and might need his shoes."



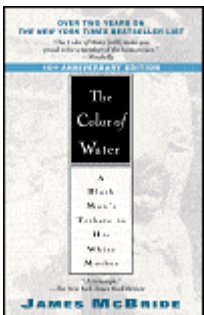
**Fuller, Alexandra** - Don't Let's Go To the Dogs Tonight - BIOGRPAHY FULLER - 301 pages

Fuller remembers her African childhood with candor and sensitivity. Though it is a diary of an unruly life in an often inhospitable place, it is suffused with Fuller's endearing ability to find laughter, even when there is little to celebrate.



**Hickam, Homer** - Rocket Boys (also published as October Sky) - BIOGRAPHY HICKAM - 368 pages

Looking back after a distinguished NASA career that fulfilled his boyhood ambition, Hickam shares the story of his youth, taking readers into the life of the little mining town and the boys who came to embody both its tensions and its dreams. With the help - and sometimes hindrance - of the people of Coalwood, the Rocket Boys learn not only how to turn mine scraps into rockets that soar miles into the heavens, but how to find hope in a town that progress is passing by.



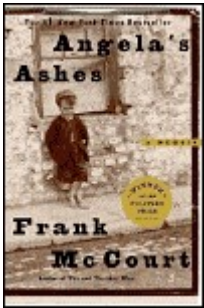
**McBride, James** - The Color Of Water: A Black Man's Tribute To His White Mother - BIOGRAPHY MCBRIDE - 352 pages

As a young black boy in Brooklyn, James McBride wondered why his mother looked different. When he asked her if she was white or black, she would answer, "I'm light-skinned." Finally, when he had become an adult, she told him her story. She was a rabbi's daughter, born in Poland, raised in the American South.

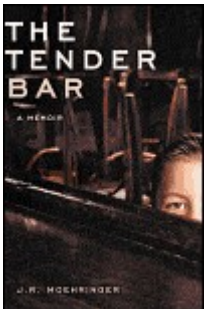


**Krakauer, Jon - Into the Wild - TEEN BIOGRAPHY MCCANDLESS - 224 pages**

In April 1992, a young man from a well-to-do family hitchhiked to Alaska and walked alone into the wilderness north of Mt. McKinley. He had given \$25,000 in savings to a charity, abandoned his car and most of his possessions, burned all the cash in his wallet and invented a life for himself. Four months later, his decomposed body was found by a moose hunter. Jon Krakauer brings Chris McCandless's uncompromising pilgrimage out of the shadows and illuminates it with meaning.

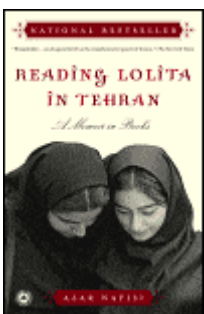


**McCourt, Frank - Angela's Ashes - BIOGRAPHY MCCOURT - 281 pages**  
Frank McCourt was born in Depression-era Brooklyn to recent Irish immigrants and raised in the slums of Limerick, Ireland. Frank's mother, Angela, has no money to feed the children since Frank's father Malachy, rarely works, and when he does he drinks his wages. Yet Malachy does nurture in Frank an appetite for the one thing he can provide: a story.

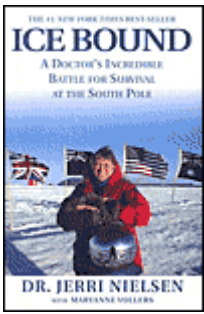


**Moehringer, J.R. - The Tender Bar - BIOGRAPHY MOEHRINGER - 370 pages**

Growing up without a father, Moehringer turned to the men at the local pub, hoping they would provide the masculine influence he so craved. These men -- who never quite grew up themselves -- became, for the forlorn young J.R., a veritable symphony of human succor and safety. As J.R. becomes a man, however, he realizes that the bar doesn't grant wishes as much as fill needs in a place where accepting the inevitability of failure is a defense against future disappointment.

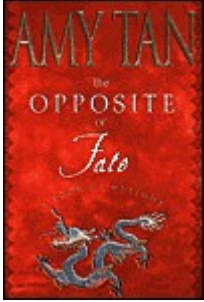


**Nafisi, Azar - Reading Lolita in Tehran - BIOGRAPHY NAFISI - 347 pages**  
For two years before she left Iran in 1997, Nafisi gathered seven young women at her house every Thursday morning to read and discuss forbidden works of Western literature. Some came from conservative and religious families, others were progressive and secular; several had spent time in jail. They were shy and uncomfortable at first, unaccustomed to being asked to speak their minds, but soon they began to open up and to speak more freely, not only about the novels they were reading but also about themselves, their dreams and disappointments.



**Nielsen, Jerri - Ice Bound: A Doctor's Incredible Battle For Survival At The South Pole - BIOGRAPHY NIELSEN - 362 pages**

While on a year's sabbatical to provide medical care at Antarctica's Amundsen-Scott South Pole Station, Nielsen discovered a lump in her breast. That's not a development ever to be welcomed, but especially not when one is stranded in one of the most remote spots on earth. Nielsen was forced to perform her own biopsy and to self-administer chemotherapy treatments for some four months until weather conditions allowed for her to be rescued.



**Tan, Amy - The Opposite of Fate - BIOGRAPHY TAN - 416 pages**

Best selling author Tan shares her insight into her own life and how she escaped the curses of her past to make a future of her own. She takes us on a journey from her childhood of tragedy and comedy to the present day and her arrival as one of the world's best-loved novelists. Whether recalling arguments with her mother in suburban California or introducing us to the ghosts that inhabit her computer, *The Opposite of Fate* offers vivid portraits of choices, attitudes, charms, and luck in action.



**Thomas, Helen - Front Row at the White House: My Life and Times - BIOGRAPHY THOMAS - 415 pages**

Helen Thomas has had an inside view of the making of history for nearly four decades. Assigned by UPI to the White House press corps in 1961, Thomas has questioned every president since Kennedy. She was the first female president of the White House Correspondents Association, the first female officer of the National Press Club, and the first woman member (and later president) of the Gridiron Club. Here she revisits her many accomplishments and offers an insider's view on the changes wrought on the office of president over the last 38 years.



**Walls, Jeannette - The Glass Castle - BIOGRAPHY WALLS - 304 pages**

Walls chronicles her upbringing at the hands of eccentric, nomadic parents--Rose Mary, her frustrated-artist mother, and Rex, her brilliant, alcoholic father. To call the elder Walls' childrearing style *laissez faire* would be putting it mildly. As Rose Mary and Rex uprooted their kids time and again Walls, her brother and two sisters were left largely to their own devices. But while Rex and Rose Mary firmly believed children learned best from their own mistakes, they themselves never seemed to do so, repeating the same disastrous patterns that eventually landed them on the streets.