

BOOK CLUBS, Spring 2018

NO FEES, just a **free** book provided by the Ogden Honors College.

NO GRADES, just your **commitment** to complete the reading and attend meetings.

NO PRESSURE, just a great opportunity to **learn** about something new.

How to sign up: Check out the book club list below, and then email Alyssa Dobson (adobso2@lsu.edu) to let her know which club you wish to join. Clubs will begin during the week of January 29 (except *Arcadia* book club). Clubs meet @ 5-7 times and will finish before finals, avoiding Mardi Gras and Spring Break. We will provide the book and the moderator; all we ask is that you make a good-faith effort to do the reading and attend the meetings. Books will be distributed at the first meeting. **Deadline to sign up for *Arcadia* club is January 15; deadline to sign up for all other clubs is January 19. Meeting schedules, if not listed below, will be announced at first meeting.**

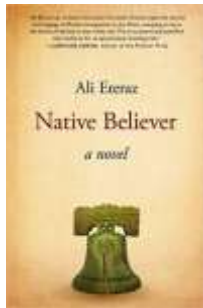


Moderator: Vincent LiCata, Professor, Biological Sciences

Meetings: Wednesday 1/17, 1/24, 1/31, 2/7 at 7:30 pm, 218 French House

Book: *Arcadia* by Tom Stoppard

On four Wednesdays at the start of Spring Semester (leading up to the Swine Palace production of the play), we will read *Arcadia*—out loud—and discuss the readings. No acting experience needed! *Arcadia* is Tom Stoppard's masterpiece. The play bounces back and forth between two time periods and addresses chaos theory, entropy, Lord Byron, steam engines, gothic landscape design, fractal geometry, and more. Includes tickets to Swine Palace's production of the play and a backstage tour.

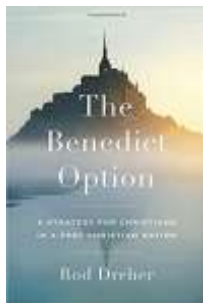


Moderator: Pallavi Rastogi, Associate Professor, English

Meetings: Mondays 3:30 pm, 203 French House; first meeting 1/29

Book: *Native Believer* by Ali Eteraz

You are a secular Muslim living a secular life in supposedly secular America. One day, you hold a party at your house where your boss finds a copy of the Koran in the remote recesses of your bookshelves. It may or may not have been YOUR Koran! Why should it matter even if it was? Yet, everything you have created around yourself crumbles when your friends and colleagues begin to view you with suspicion. *Native Believer* is particularly relevant today when hearts are being hardened by the presence of religious others, forcing us to confront our complicity in American Islamophobia. Oprah describes the novel as “a wickedly funny Philadelphia picaresque about a secular Muslim’s identity crisis in a country waging a never-ending war on terror.”

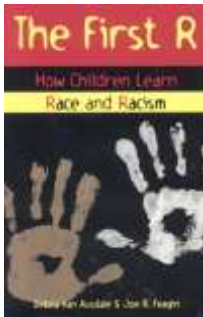


Moderator: Michael Pasquier, Associate Professor, Religious Studies

Meetings: Mondays 4:00 pm, 200 French House; first meeting 1/29

Book: *The Benedict Option: A Strategy for Christians in a Post-Christian Nation* by Rod Dreher

Rod Dreher, an LSU grad and bestselling conservative writer, believes that we live in a post-Christian nation. His solution to what he sees as a problem? Go back to the 6th century, when St. Benedict of Nursia founded a Christian community dedicated to order, hospitality, stability, and prayer. Is this really feasible? Do we really live in a post-Christian nation? And so what if we do? A columnist for the *New York Times* describes *The Benedict Option* as “already the most discussed and most important religious book of the decade.”

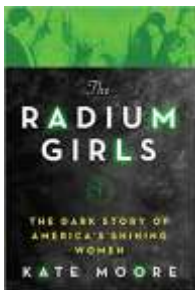


Moderator: Sarah Becker, Associate Professor, Sociology

Meetings: Tuesdays at 3:00 pm, 203 French House; first meeting 1/30

Book: *The First R: How Children Learn Race and Racism* by Debra Van Ausdale and Joe Feagin

Many people assume young children remain largely unaware of race and racism until they are older and more able to understand the world around them. People also tend to view children's play as innocuous and without racialized meaning. VanAusdale and Feagin's book challenges these assumptions. Using in-depth ethnographic observations conducted for eleven months in daycare centers, they reveal how kids notice and engage with race and racialized meanings long before they enter school and start their formal education.

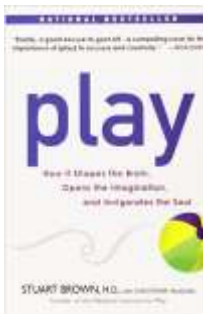


Moderator: Becky Carmichael, CxC Science Coordinator

Meetings: Tuesday at 3:30 pm, 300 French House; first meeting 1/30

Book: *The Radium Girls: The Dark Story of America's Shining Women* by Kate Moore

Radium, newly discovered by the Curies', was a bright shining element finding its way into beauty products, tonics, and more in the years around World War I. At the same time, hundreds of young women were hired to paint the dials on watches and airplane instruments. The women were known as "the Radium Girls" and literally glowed from radium paint. As they coated the dials, the women got paint in their hair, on their hands, and on their clothing. They also ingested radium when licking their paintbrushes into fine points. After years of exposure, the women became sick as radium began replacing the calcium of their bones. *The Radium Girls* is the story of the dial painters and how they took on the radium companies that made them sick.



Moderator: Laurie Braden, Director, University Recreation

Meetings: Tuesday 1/30, 2/6, 2/20, 2/27, 3/13, 4/3 at 4:00 pm, 203 French House

Book: *Play: How it Shapes the Brain, Opens the Imagination, and Invigorates the Soul* by Stuart Brown, M.D.

Be a player! It shapes your brain, opens the imagination, invigorates the soul and yes, play is a sex symbol & love potion! Come join us for a discussion including the neuroscience and social science research on why YOU should play!

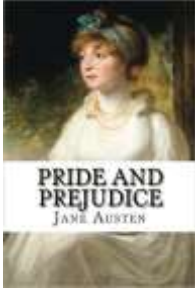


Moderator: Leslie Tuttle, Associate Professor, History

Meetings: Wednesdays at 4:00 pm, 200 French House; first meeting 1/31

Book: *Jonathan Strange & Mr. Norrell* by Susanna Clarke

It's Jane-Austen-meets-Harry-Potter in this extraordinarily creative, prize-winning fantasy novel published in 2004. Set in the age of Britain's warfare against Napoleonic France, the novel offers itself as a "History of English Magic" – complete with very entertaining footnotes. The scenario: Magic, once believed to have died with the age of fairies, is revived in the context of the modernizing world of the nineteenth century by two magicians with opposing notions about how a "gentleman" should use it. The striking anachronism of magic in Austenesque drawing room scenes invites readers to think about the historical origins of the novel as a realistic literary form. Both dark and funny, this novel will be a treat for anyone who ever wished to matriculate at Hogwarts.



Moderator: Drew Lamonica Arms, Professional in Residence, OHC

Meetings: Wednesdays at 4:30 pm, 203 French House; first meeting 1/31

Book: *Pride and Prejudice* by Jane Austen

“It is a truth universally acknowledged” that everyone should read Jane Austen. In her “comedy of manners” *Pride and Prejudice*, Austen displays her unique ability to ridicule hypocrites, expose social climbers, analyze human foibles, and bring together both likely and unlikely pairs of lovers. How and why are the stories of a small group of English country gentry in the early 19th century still relevant today? We’ll explore how Austen is a master at “taking ordinary life and making it extraordinary” and discover that there’s more to *Pride and Prejudice* than Mr. Darcy. We’ll end our discussions with a visit to *Austenland*.



Moderator: Isiah Lavender III, Assistant Professor, English

Meetings: Thursdays at 8:00 pm, 200 French House; first meeting 2/1

Book: *Parable of the Sower* by Octavia Butler

It's the End of the World...yet again. Students possess an overt familiarity with the dystopian idea because of the recent glut of young adult novels featuring human misery and oppression such as Suzanne Collins's *The Hunger Games* (2008) or James Dashner's *The Maze Runner* (2009) or Scott Westerfeld's *Uglies* (2005) or.... You get the point! You've read this stuff, but not Octavia Butler's earlier, and dare I say superior, *Parable of the Sower* (1993). Butler's novel, set in the not-too-distant future around the city of Los Angeles, depicts a failing middle-class as it attempts to hang on to the trappings of prosperity while America falls apart around it. Sounds a lot like today! The story features a black female teen-aged protagonist, Lauren Olamina, who relates her intimate experiences of the world through her journal and her poetry. We will talk about attitudes, assumptions, and feelings by which our society has conditioned everyone.