

Members were asked to read any book as the original set book was only out in hardback.

***Beryl Sapiens – A Brief History of Humankind – Yuval Harari***

Started off well, some interesting explanations but the second half of the book became very hard to read, and had difficult concepts to understand. **Not recommended**

***Ann – Career of Evil – Robert Galbraith.*** Ann used an audiobook, found it slow: 16 separate discs each 1 hour long. Also, was very difficult to find the place you were last listening, too, if you fell asleep! Cormoran Strike book featuring Robin Ellacott, a good read with lots of twist and turns. **Recommended**

***Helen – 6<sup>th</sup> Target - James Patterson.*** This book had 136 small chapters, which although kept the pace going, was very irritating. It featured Alex Cross and was, to start with, very gripping. The end was not at all satisfactory and the book was not in the same category as his earlier works – **Not recommended**

***Liz – Year of Wonders – Geraldine Brooks.*** A young woman's struggle to save her family and soul during the 1666 plague in Eyam. This book was fascinating and very atmospheric as, as a reader, you felt you knew the young girl Anna Frith. **Recommended**

***Jackie – Prince of Fire - Daniel Silver*** (4<sup>th</sup> in a series but can also be read as a stand-alone novel.) It is a spy thriller novel with the twist that the spy is in the Jewish Secret Service; he is also an art restorer. The book is a good read and it explains the background to the Palestine/Israeli conflicts. **Recommended**

***Jan – Twilight's Last Gleaming – John Michael Greer.*** The novel is a work of speculative political fiction in which a declining USA attempts to gain control of some desperately needed oil by overthrowing the government of Tanzania, prompting an intervention of their ally China with disastrous consequences. The first half of this book was very good, showing the tactics of war; it was exciting and informative. The second part was about the aftermath of war and was very laboured and assumes the reader has good knowledge of the USA's political structures. **Not recommended**

***Carolyn – Hot Milk – Deborah Levy.*** This book was shortlisted for the Man Booker Prize and The Goldsmith Prize in 2016. It's the story of Sofia Papastergiadis who's travelled from London to a sun-baked Spanish town to accompany her hypochondriac mother to a high end medical clinic. Sofia is intelligent; she's abandoned her PhD in anthropology to be a caregiver, but she is also passive and confused. The mother has a nasty turn of phrase to Sophie. The book was difficult to read especially in the second half – **Not Recommended**

***Irene – The Dressmaker of Dachau – Mary Chamberlain*** – This is a dramatic book of love, conflict, betrayal and survival. The heroine is 18-year-old Ada Vaughan, an excellent seamstress. She is taken to Paris by the enigmatic Stanislaus von Lieben and becomes trapped in Paris, where she is abandoned by Lieben and is taken prisoner where she works for a commandant of Dachau. A gripping tale which Irene could not put down – **Recommended.**

***Rosemary – The Shepherd's Life – James Rebanks*** – James is the son of a shepherd, who was also the son of a shepherd. Their way of life is ordered by the seasons; a sometimes-gruelling life. The book shows the strong interpersonal relationships which withstand conflict. It is a book that inspires hope and is a 'warm' read – **Recommended**

***Millie – Biography of Arnold Bennett by Margaret Dribble*** – A good read showing the background, childhood and origins of Bennett.

***Ruth – The Other Hand – Chris Cleave.*** This book moves from a violent encounter on a Nigerian Beach to the suburbs of London. It touches upon the issues of immigration, globalisation, political violence and personal accountability. It is a very moving story, and the ending is not happy. It is very well written and is compelling reading. It makes the reader think deeply about the issues it raises. – **Recommended.**