Leisure Reading List

These (optional! but amazing) readings bring us into the world of medicine and Chicago through language and imagination. Through literature, we can explore the human experience beyond our medical studies, and we continue to find new ways of seeing and being through our ongoing reading and conversation. We invite you to join us in this endeavor—and to come to book club events throughout the year! In fact, we will be having our first book club event of the year a few days prior to orientation. While our August book selection is still currently under deliberation, we would love to have you join us if you will be in town! More details to come!

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Leaders of the Pritzker Book Club

**MEDICAL NONFICTION**

*Being Mortal: Medicine and What Matters in the End* by Atul Gawande: In his latest book, Gawande explores how medicine must consider not only the improvement of life and living, but aging and death as well.

*When Breath Becomes Air* by Paul Kalanithi: Years of witnessing suffering and death as a young neurosurgery resident did little to prepare Paul Kalanithi to confront his own death when he received a diagnosis of terminal lung cancer, right as his career was poised to take off. This unforgettable memoir is a must-read for anyone who questions what it is to lead an examined life in the medical profession.

*On the Move: A Life* by Oliver Sacks: Published shortly before his death in 2015, *On the Move* follows esteemed neurologist Oliver Sacks from his youth as a drug-addicted bodybuilding motorcyclist in 1960s California to become one of the most influential neurologists and medical writers of the 20th century.
An Unquiet Mind: A Memoir of Moods and Madness by Kay Redfield Jamison: In this ground-breaking and prodigiously intimate memoir, Jamison, a professor of psychiatry at Johns Hopkins University examines her experience with bipolar disorder as both a professional and a patient. Replete with stories of manic and mixed episodes, struggles with medication, and finally, resilience bolstered by therapy, Jamison gives us a deeply compelling glimpse into the life of an individual who has both 'walked the walk' and 'talked the talk.'

The Center Cannot Hold by Elyn R. Saks: Saks’ engrossing memoir is the genre at its best—candor that gives rise to compassion. This finely-written work tells the story of a USC law professor’s life with schizophrenia, beginning with bouts of paranoia at age eight, recounting many of the pharmaceutical and psychodynamic therapeutic practices she engaged with and that have helped (and some, harmed) her along the way, and culminating in her current work as an advocate for the human and civil rights of those struggling with mental health.

Ward No. 6 Anton Chekhov: A doctor becomes a patient in the same asylum where he once worked. This essay explores the conflict between reality and philosophy, and how people intellectualize reality to justify inaction.
**The Citadel** by A. J. Cronin: Traces the fortunes of Andrew Manson, a fiercely independent Scottish physician whose integrity and ideals endure pitiless buffeting by the hidebound British medical establishment. Poignant, troubling, and at times agonizingly suspenseful, this unassuming classic warrants reading by anyone interested in the – often unsettling – history of the medical profession.

**Aarowsmith**, by Sinclair Lewis: Lewis probes the tensions between scientific inquiry and medical traditionalism in early-20th-century America. Dr. Martin Arrowsmith, the title character, struggles to forge his identity as a scientist despite a myriad of obstacles – hostile, contemptuous, or indifferent colleagues; the lure of lucrative administrative career; personal tragedy. Lewis received – and declined – the Pulitzer Prize for this grimly amusing novel.

**Chicago: City on the Make** by Nelson Algren: A prose poem “about the alleys, the El tracks, the neon and dive bars, the beauty and cruelty of Chicago” that covers 120 years of Chicago history.
The Devil in the White City by Erik Larson: This bestselling true story weaves together the stories of Daniel H. Burnham, the architect who oversees construction of the 1893 Worlds Fair (held on the Midway in Hyde Park) and H.H. Holmes, the serial killer using the fair to entrap his victims.

CHICAGO FICTION

Herzog by Saul Bellow: Bellow is indisputably Chicago’s most famous literary son, who, for a time, called Hyde Park and the University of Chicago home. Herzog tells the tale of Moses E. Herzog, a tragically confused intellectual who suffers from the breakup of his second marriage, the general failure of his life, and the specter of growing up Jewish in the mid-20th century.

Native Son by Richard Wright: The Story of a young poor black man “doomed” by the world in which he lives. Set in Hyde Park and Bronzeville, Wright’s protagonist is simultaneously hateful and deserving of our compassion.