

## LP<sup>2</sup> STUDY GROUP PROPOSAL FOR FALL 2022

### **NARRATIVE NON-FICTION: ADVENTURES IN PRINT**

**Coordinators:** Judy Adelson, Ted Dreyfus, Marge Heins and Toni Young (Aileen Gitelson, organizer)

Do you just shake your head when someone suggests that you read a non-fiction book? This study group hopes to change your mind. We read and discuss unique non-fiction books with story lines and characters that easily compete with the intrigue and excitement of fiction. This semester the four books we read are written by prize winning authors whose topics will rivet your attention. The quality of the writing is rivaled only by the compelling stories these authors tell. These are books that will surprise you and challenge your assumptions, have you cheering for protagonists and hissing at the villains. The LP<sup>2</sup> members who are coordinating these books are committed to lively, engaging and thought-provoking discussions. Book titles and descriptions are below.

**Judy Adelson** is a recent member of LP<sup>2</sup>. In her early career she was a high school English teacher and teacher of English as a Second Language to recent immigrants. She became a social worker and has worked as a school social worker and is currently working as a psychotherapist, **Ted Dreyfus** lived for over 30 years in Latin America as an exchange student, Peace Corps Volunteer, banker, turn-around manager and rancher. He still runs his tree farm and horse ranch in Uruguay. He has coordinated study groups on Environmental Threats, Global Warming, South American Film and Narrative Non-Fiction. **Marge Heins** is a recent member of LP<sup>2</sup>. She previously coordinated a study group on Vichy France and the Nazi Occupation. She is a former lawyer and author of several books on civil rights and censorship. She now gives tours at the Met in the Impressionism/Post-Impressionism galleries. **Toni Young** has been a member of LP<sup>2</sup> since 2018 and taught a book as a member of the Memoir study group and was one of the coordinators of Narrative Non-Fiction in the Fall 2021 semester. **Aileen Gitelson** (organizer) is a social worker who has worked in hospitals and community-based agencies that serve older adults. She has previously co-coordinated two study groups—The Harlem Renaissance and Soviet Jewish Writers and was the organizer of The New Yorker Art of the Profile, Spring 2022.

**Type of Study Group:** Mostly discussion

**Readings and other Materials/Online Services:**

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*The Chickenshit Club: Why the Justice Department Fails to Prosecute Executives* by Jesse Eisinger. (2017)

In March 2022 Eisinger spoke at LP2's Fridays@1 on "Why Billionaires Don't Pay Taxes". In *The Chickenshit Club* he asks another question that puzzles and infuriates us: How did the titans of finance escape any penalties for causing the 2008 financial collapse? The book also raises the kinds of concerns reflected in the new Manhattan District Attorney's decision to stop the criminal investigation of Donald Trump. Coordinated by Ted Dreyfus.

*The Private Lives of the Impressionists* by Sue Roe. (2006)

Spanning the last four decades of the 19th century, *Private Lives* recounts the art world revolution created by a group of young rebel painters who became known as the Impressionists. This group study of Manet, Monet, Degas, Morisot, Cassatt, Renoir, Caillebotte, Pissarro, Gauguin and Cézanne weaves personal, political and art history into a fascinating narrative. Coordinated by Marge Heins.

*Hiroshima* by John Hershey. (1946)

On August 6, 1945, Hiroshima was destroyed by the first atom bomb ever dropped on a city. This book, John Hersey's journalistic masterpiece, tells what happened on that day. Told through the memories of survivors, this timeless, powerful and compassionate document has become a classic. Coordinated by Toni Young.

*Far From the Tree: Parents, Children and the Search for Identity* by Andrew Solomon. (2012)

The book tells the stories of the ways in which children are different from their parents—what such differences do to conventional ideas about family, and how families accommodate these children who have physical, mental and social disabilities. Coordinated by Judy Adelson.

**\*\*\*\*\* SYLLABUS - A WORK IN PROGRESS \*\*\*\*\***

*For those who prefer to read fewer pages in Weeks 1-3, the coordinator will suggest sections to skip for those weeks.*

**WEEK 1**

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**TOPIC:** *The Chickenshit Club: Why the Justice Department Fails to Prosecute Executives*

**READING:** Introduction, pp. 1-110 or as suggested by coordinator

**QUESTIONS:**

What's the purpose in prosecuting white-collar crime? Compliance? Deterrence? Punishment? Justice? Why were there so many high-profile indictments and conviction of top-level executives after the 2001 financial crisis? How did the Enron investigation manage to get criminal convictions of top executives? How does the Department of Justice (DOJ) decide who to investigate and prosecute? Do you think it's even-handed and fair? In cases of financial fraud and abuse do you think the government should prosecute corporations or individuals? Why?

### WEEK 2

**TOPIC:** *The Chickenshit Club: Why the Justice Department Fails to Prosecute Executives*

**READING:** pp. 111-201 or as suggested by the coordinator

**QUESTIONS:**

What's more effective in preventing white-collar crime, systemic regulation (laws) or prosecuting corporations and individuals? Why? How do settlements or Deferred Prosecution Agreements (DPAs) impact the public's demand for "justice"? Is it OK to require waiving attorney-client privilege in negotiating settlements of corporate fraud investigations? Why? Does the revolving door of corporate employment of former federal prosecutors cause the lack of aggressiveness in prosecuting white-collar crime? Why does the DOJ not apply the same prosecution criteria to senior executives as it does to street criminals?

### WEEK 3

**TOPIC:** *The Chickenshit Club: Why the Justice Department Fails to Prosecute Executives*

**READING:** pp. 202-330 or as suggested by the coordinator

**QUESTIONS:**

How does a legally justified settlement—based on evidence and/or witnesses—assure justice has been served? In a settlement which do you think is more important, the size of the penalty payment or the admission of guilt? Apart from the quality of the prosecution and defense arguments in corporate fraud cases, how much does the judge himself determine the

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outcome? Do you think the problem of aggressive DOJ prosecutions is one of individual leadership? How does The Chickenshit Club help us to understand the new Manhattan District Attorney's pursuit of the criminal investigation of Donald Trump?

### WEEK 4

**TOPIC:** *The Private Lives of the Impressionists*

**READING:** pp. 1-94

### WEEK 5

**TOPIC:** *The Private Lives of the Impressionists*

**READING:** pp. 95-210

### WEEK 6

**TOPIC:** *The Private Lives of the Impressionists*

**READING:** pp. 211-273

### WEEK 7

**TOPIC:** *Hiroshima*

**READING:** Parts 1 and 2

### WEEK 8

**TOPIC:** *Hiroshima*

**READING:** Parts 3 and 4

### WEEK 9

**TOPIC:** *Hiroshima*

**READING:** Part 5

### WEEK 10

**TOPIC:** *Far From the Tree*

**READING:** Chapter 1, pp. 1-47; Chapter 2, pp. 49-114

### WEEK 11

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**TOPIC:** *Far From the Tree*

**READING:** Chapter 6, pp. 295-353; Chapter 7, pp. 355-404

### WEEK 12

**TOPIC:** *Far From the Tree*

**READING:** Chapter 8, pp. 405-476; Chapter 12, pp. 677-702

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