

Don't you love this time of year? We're so ready to shed the weighty cloak of winter and slip into the light of spring. The air is sweetly scented with new blossoms, their perfume tickling our senses with the promise of longer days and warmer nights.

Monthly meetings with the Ladies on Literature can only get brighter! Always resplendent with savory samplings and sumptuous sips; engaging discussion and loud out loud fun; join us, won't you?

Log onto [shannonlinden.ca](http://shannonlinden.ca) to catch up on our books and take a roam through the LOL tab to meet the members. Send me an email! Let me know what you're reading and what you think.

The following three books are as diverse as we fifteen but isn't that one of the pleasures of a book club?



**Gone Girl**  
by Gillian Flynn

This book is an absolute blockbuster and its author on fire. Sales soar in the millions and a movie deal has been signed (Flynn is writing the screenplay; Reese Witherspoon is producing).

Called one of the most critically acclaimed suspense writers of our time, Flynn wrote previous novels, *Sharp Objects* and *Dark Places* while working for *Entertainment Weekly*, but when she lost her job and turned to fiction full time, she flourished.

Not only does she weave a stunning, unexpected story, she writes with an intoxicating edginess. With its plot twists and page-flipping turns, gripping scenarios and never-sure who's being truthful bits, I could not put this book down.

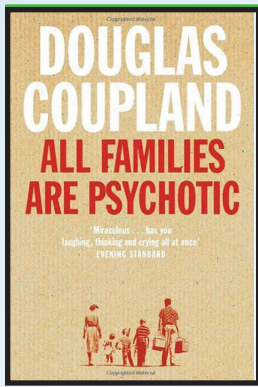
Amy Dunne disappears on the day of her fifth wedding anniversary and her husband, Nick, is the prime suspect. Nick's lack of emotion and odd obsession with the shape of his wife's head along with his insistence she was a spoiled brat, nearly impossible to live with and entirely impossible to figure out, leaves the reader doubting his innocence.

The reader is doubly unsure about charming, handsome Nick when Amazing Amy takes over the telling of the story. From the past perspective of her diary, Amy makes herself out to be a kind, generous, every loving and self-sacrificing wife. Sure the marriage has its difficulties and both unemployed writers are a little depressed, but they love one another...don't they?

A psychological thriller about a love gone wrong, it's a disturbingly entertaining read. Not all the LOL agreed: some found it uncomfortable and along with many other readers, were distressed by the unsettling ending.

Myself? I need a break, but I'll be back for more from the fabulous Flynn.

5/5 Cheers!



**All Families Are Psychotic**  
by Douglas Coupland

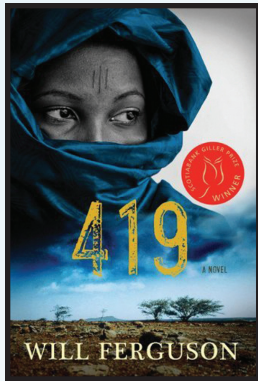
Canadian author, Douglas Coupland, has a cult following of readers who relish his brilliantly written, laugh-out loud novels—poignant and positively laden with cultural commentary and quirky characters. *Generation X* (his first book) was an international bestseller. The reviews of *All Families*, however, are quite mixed, with the LOL concurring.

Vikki's selection, we immediately giggled at the premise: the fragmented and highly dysfunctional Drummond family (just happens to be Vik's last name), reunite to see their star member—astronaut, Sarah, a thalidomide baby—launched into space.

Everyone else has made a mess of their lives but the insanity is just beginning as one disaster after another unfolds under the unforgiving Floridian sun. There are kidnappings, mothers and sons with AIDS, fathers who leave their wives for younger women (with whom sons sleep); a sadistic black market baby mill, gunfire, broken down vans and broken hearts.

It's a wild and crazy ride of a read and some members just couldn't get into it. Comments like, "It was just too weird" or "too unbelievable" pervaded, yet everyone agreed the writing is quite brilliant, the social commentary exceptional. In the end it is a humorously hopeful story about the sloppy, yet sticky, glue that bonds families.

3.5/5 Cheers!



**419**  
by Will Ferguson

Acclaimed Canadian humorist, Will Ferguson, took a gamble when he wrote *419*. A foray into the dark depths of Nigerian internet scamming, there's little room for humor in the "oil and blood drenched streets and backwaters of Nigeria."

The book opens with the death of a retired Calgary teacher who becomes distraught after draining his life savings on one of the insidious scams. The story follows the path of his daughter as she tries to unravel the truth, beginning in Canada and ending in Nigeria.

Four sub-plots follow, making the book brilliantly constructed but rather long and slightly dragged out. It is, however, exceptionally well researched and as LOL member, Kathy, commented, "I learned something about those annoyingly poorly written but emotionally laden emails I myself have received in the past."

Enlightening, to be sure, *419* isn't uplifting. No one wins in this story—except the author, who went home \$50,000 richer after claiming the 2012 Giller for his work.

This book is an eye-opener; a reminder to follow our instincts and to keep our bank accounts to ourselves; and maybe to give thanks for the first world we live in. Timely and taught with tension, the pace picks up as the story lines collide in this worth-the-read winner.

4.5 Cheers!

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