

Date: May 17, 2017

Hostess: Julie Coup

Book Title: Homegoing

Author: Yaa Gyasi

Book Synopsis: Each chapter of the book focuses on the experiences of an individual character, similar to a series of short stories. It crosses decades, the world and generations showing how two sides of a family are reunited. The mother Maame and her two daughters by different fathers are key characters within the tales of slavery in and beyond Africa. The ruling British soldiers/government and their impact upon the slave trade is highlighted as is the roles of native Africans enslaving their own people. The West African chapters create the heart of the book, moving deep within humanity. The American chapters were for the most part harrowing, with explicit descriptions of efforts to escape bondage, torture, and preparing the African-American children how to interact with police. Passionate as well as compassionate, Gyasi's first novel has gained much acclaim and high reviews.

Our Review: In general, the Morsels felt the book was difficult to follow with the infusion of so many characters with often intricately woven yet self-contained stories. The shift from one to another could prove to be a daunting task at times.

Food Served: Groundnuts (aka peanuts in the shell), yam fries, Awrey Bakery's corn toast tops, cheese and crostini were served as appetizers. The dessert was homemade three-ingredient mango ice cream topped with fresh raspberry sauce and toasted coconut and plantain bread on the side.

Highlights of Discussion: Refer to "Our Review". In addition, much was learned about the historical background of slavery as it thrived in Africa well before its expansion to America. The intense descriptions throughout the text were impactful, and the author's craft was complimented.

Attendance: Julie Coup, Nancy Dausman, Mary Grant, Anne Hill, Laura Lewakowski, Ginny Martin, Nancy McQuate, Sandy Oato and Nancy Schellenberg. (100% despite two illnesses and three broken ribs!)

Business/Suggestions: The possibility of a time to discuss *When Breath Becomes Air* was brought up. Nancy S. will get back to the group regarding this. The next book will be *The Last Bus to Wisdom* by Ivan Doig at Nancy McQuate's house.