Reading group meetings start at 7:30 p.m. and generally end around 9:30 p.m. New participants are welcome. Please e-mail or call the hosts at least two days before the meeting to let them know you expect to attend and to confirm the location. (Locations sometimes change.) Contact Peter Greenfield ’67 with questions or suggestions (petergreenfield@msn.com; 206/322-2640).

No meeting in May.

Wednesday, June 16th
*The Cider House Rules*, by John Irving
Home of Barbara Carter Radin ’75
8815 42nd Avenue NE, Seattle 98115
bcradin@comcast.net
(206) 523-2484

A Book-It Theater production of part one of *The Cider House Rules* is scheduled to run from June 9th through July 11th.

Wednesday, July 21st
*The Reluctant Fundamentalist*, by Mohsin Hamid
Home of Jane Ellis ’67
80 E Roanoke St Apt 12, Seattle 98102
JEllisMA@msn.com
(206) 525-5557

(‘Front door is on Yale Avenue E. between Roanoke and Edgar and you must park on either Roanoke or Edgar to avoid the permit requirements. Or take buses 70, 71 or 73 from downtown.)

“I am a lover of America,’ the young Pakistani narrator of this lucid, unsettling novel begins. In the course of a single day and night, he divulges to a mysterious and possibly menacing American his love affair with this country: embraced first by Princeton, then by a New York firm of business analysts, and finally by the beautiful daughter of a patrician Upper East Side family. Throughout his brilliant trajectory, however, he is troubled by the easy, almost insolent sense of superiority in his American peers, who take for granted their status as sons of empire. Only in the wake of the September 11th attacks, when America’s wrath turns toward his homeland, does he realize that he has become a latter-day janissary – akin to the children of defeated nations who, conscripted in the army of the enemy, ‘fought to erase their own civilizations.’” “Books Briefly Noted,” in the New Yorker Magazine.

Wednesday, September 15th
*All Passions Spent*, by Vita Sackville-West
Location to be announced.
The protagonist, in her eighties, reflects on the paths she took and on those she was unable to (or chose not to) take, beginning with her marriage in 1860 at the age of 17. The novel was published in 1931. An excellent film adaptation was produced by the BBC in 1986. It is directed by Peter Buckman (who also wrote the screenplay) and stars Wendy Hiller. We plan to discuss both book and film, and may arrange a group viewing of the film, which is available on DVD.

**Wednesday, November 17th**
*David Copperfield*, by Charles Dickens
Location to be announced.

**Wednesday, January 19th**
*The Metaphysical Club*, by Louis Menand and *The Education of Henry Adams*, by Henry Adams
Location to be announced.

After the reading group’s recent visit to mid-19th-Century Boston in *The Dante Club*, interest was expressed in reading and discussing some historical material about the period. Since there was significant interest in both *The Metaphysical Club* and *The Education of Henry Adams* (though some people were interested primarily in one and some in the other), we decided to invite people to read either or both and see what happens in the discussion.

The Henry Adams autobiography was the subject of a recent *Writer’s Almanac* segment by Garrison Keillor. Here are some comments from that segment (perhaps edited by the person who sent them to me):

“It's the birthday of historian Henry Adams, born in Boston in 1838. He came from a wealthy, famous family — his grandfather and great-grandfather were John Quincy Adams and John Adams, respectively; his father was a diplomat; and he was generally surrounded by accomplished men. But he was not happy about it, and he didn't want to live up to all the expectations that came with the Adams name. He went to Harvard, but he didn't do very well and didn't learn much. So he traveled all over, came back, and started to write — at first journalism, but soon he turned to history. With an insider's perspective of society, government, and power in America, he re-imagined the role of the historian; he said, ‘The historian's business is to follow the track of energy; to find where it comes from and where it went to; its complex course and shifting channels; its values, equivalents, conversions.’ His most famous book was ‘The Education of Henry Adams,’ an autobiography, and it was the first of its kind. Instead of a straightforward account of the events of his life, it was a long reflection on his internal development in relation to a changing industrial society, his personal ideas about America and about himself. It was written in the third person, and it was funny and cynical. Adams wrote *The Education of Henry Adams* a few years before he died, but he only published it as a private edition for his friends. After his death in 1918, it was reprinted for the general public, and won a Pulitzer Prize.”
Louis Menand’s *The Metaphysical Club* was also recognized with a Pulitzer Prize (for history in 2002). It follows the development of ideas about science, race, war (the Civil War, in particular), evolution, religion and society in the period between the Civil War and the First World War by focusing on the lives and the words of Oliver Wendell Holmes, William James and some of their associates. Henry Louis Gates has commented: "There is no more elegant writer of American prose than Louis Menand. *The Metaphysical Club* makes a genuinely original contribution to our national self-understanding. It is as evocative, and precise, as a Luminist painting." Joan Didion called it “brilliant, illuminating, necessary.”