

BNC TREASURE COAST 2025-26 STUDY GROUP GUIDE

BRANDEIS NATIONAL COMMITTEE MISSION STATEMENT

Brandeis National Committee is dedicated to providing philanthropic support to Brandeis University, a distinguished liberal arts and research University founded by the American Jewish community. Its membership is connected to the University through fundraising and through activities that reflect the values on which the University was founded: academic excellence, social justice, non-sectarianism, and service to the community.

***“Every citizen must have education, broad and continuous. Education must continue throughout life.”
- Louis D. Brandeis***

We hope you find this year’s offerings inspiring, fun and challenging. Join as many groups as you can to enjoy learning new skills or information in a comfortable environment.



**NEW THIS YEAR! Members will be able to register and pay for INDIVIDUAL SESSIONS.
The pricing structure has also changed. See registration page for detailed pricing.**

Alternatives to Traditional Medicine



Join Debbie in her kitchen to learn about everyday foods that heal. Explore the wonders of “super foods.” They are more than just foods; they can improve your health. You will have an opportunity to taste some tea. In the second session, Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine for Modern Illnesses, Dr. Natalie Lewis will address what acupuncture is, how it works, its benefits, and what conditions it is effective for treating. Limited to 12 members.

DATES: FRIDAY, 11/14, 2/3

TIME: 1:00 PM

SESSION 1: November 14, Healing Foods

SESSION 2: Tuesday, February 3, Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine for Modern Illnesses

Canasta



We have members interested in teaching and playing Canasta! We do not have detailed information yet for this group, but if you are interested, please check the box on the registration page and we will contact you.

Contemporary Fiction



Three young American authors will take us on adventures from the past to present day. Hop aboard the “time machine” and enjoy the ride. Limited to 15 members.

DATES: WEDNESDAYS, 11/5, 1/7, 3/4

TIME: 2 PM

BOOKS:

SESSION 1: November 5, *The Entire Sky* by Joe Wilkins

SESSION 2 : January 7, *Wandering Stars*, by Tommy Orange

SESSION 3: March 4: *The Heart of Winter*, by Jonathan Evison

DOO-WOP MUSIC



You know you LOVE it, but how much do you really know about DOO-WOP?

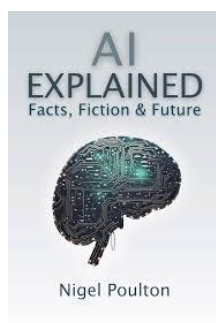
We will explore the origins, significance, cultural impact, decline and revival of this group singing. We'll watch videos of '50s-'60s performers who lead this era and made those times exciting.

And then.....let's bring out the karaoke machine and relive our glory days as we sing the music of our youth.

DATE: WEDNESDAY, 1/14

TIME: 1:00-3:30 PM

Ethical Dilemmas and Artificial Intelligence



As amateur philosophers, this year we will take on the ethical issues surrounding artificial intelligence, with the book *AI Explained: Facts, Fiction & Future*, by Nigel Poulton, as our guide.

We will learn the basics about AI together. No experience or prior knowledge required!

DATES: WEDNESDAYS, 1/21, 2/18

TIME: 1 PM

PLACE: Zoom

SESSION 1: January 21, Learning the basics of AI and potential for ethical issues

SESSION 2: February 18, Potential misuses of AI

Group members will need to purchase the book, *AI Explained: Facts, Fiction & Future*, by Nigel Poulton

Florida Treasures



Florida Treasures, formerly known as Treasures of the Treasure Coast, has a new name as we venture beyond our beloved Treasure Coast, to other attractions nearby! This year, you can tour the Benzaiten Center for the Creative Arts for a glassblowing demonstration, visit the gallery and the gift shop. Next, you can visit Kai-Kai Farms and enjoy a farm-to-table lunch of delicious, freshly picked, sustainable foods.

DATES: TUESDAY, 12/2, THURSDAY, 3/26

TIME: 10:30 AM

PLACE: See descriptions below

SESSION 1: December 2, 10:30 AM, **Benzaiten Center for the Creative Arts, Lake Worth.**

Our group tour will feature a narrated glassblowing demonstration in the largest “hot shop” in South Florida. We will tour the 2,000-square foot fine arts gallery and hear a brief history of the unique Historic FEC Train Depot building which dates back to 1928. After the demo, our group will be given time to holiday shop in the “Crystal Gift Shop” filled with unique one-of-a-kind items affordable to anyone’s pocketbook.

We have three people lined up as drivers. Carpools will depart at 9:30am from Port St. Lucie, Palm City & Hobe Sound.

Cost \$15. Minimum of 10 people required.

SESSION 2: March 26, 10:30 AM, **Kai-Kai Farm Tour and Salad Lunch, Indiantown.**

Enjoy a walking tour and a chance to support the farm and their sustainability practices.

A farm-to-table private salad lunch in the East garden dining hall will follow the tour.

Kai-Kai Farm includes 40 acres of breathtaking views and rustic charm. Produce is harvested the same day to give freshness and flavor a whole new meaning. Many local restaurants carry their produce.

Cost \$35 tour and lunch. Minimum of 20 people required.

Tour is \$15 Lunch is \$20

Gardening: Those Pesky Pests



Gardening in the tropics can be easy AND fun, but we all have to battle those “pesky pests!” our leader has lined up a professional, Jennifer Pelham, County Extension Director and Horticultural Agent, to share her expertise, and show us all how to win the Battle of the BUGS!

DATE: MONDAY, 2/23

TIME: 1 PM

Kapell's Korner



This is a reprise of our leader's VERY successful and interesting group from 2025. Don't miss it this year! Explore the best of Foreign Language Films with the group leader. Each film selected has been nominated or received the award for Best International Foreign Film by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. We will view the film together and follow with a lively discussion. Most films last about 2 hours.

DATES: TUESDAYS, 3/10 and 3/24

TIME: 1 PM

SESSION 1: March 10, Award winning foreign film title TBD

SESSION 2: March 24, Award winning foreign film title TBD

Knitwits and Other Needle Arts



Join knitters, crocheters, needlepointers, quilters and embroiderers of all levels to learn new skills, work on projects and enjoy needle arts together. Beginners welcome.

DATES: TUESDAYS, 1/13, 3/3

TIME: 10:30 AM

SESSION 1: January 13, Bring your questions about cast-ons, bind-offs, blocking, gauge, fit, pattern reading or anything knitting. Some crochet and needlepoint expertise available too! Bring a project to work on or Kaarin can help you find one!

SESSION 2: March 3, same agenda as session 1.

Let's Do Lunch!



Let's get together for lunch at Fig and Olive in Jensen Beach. Lunch will be at a date TBD during the winter. If you are interested in being contacted for this group, please indicate on the registration form.

Let's Get Crafty!



Let's get crafty! We will learn how to decorate gorgeous Valentine cookies using royal icing, and in session 2, explore how to use polymer clay to make a fun home decor tropical fish you can hang on your wall! **Limited to 8 members. There will be a materials fee of \$8 for EACH session.**

DATES: TUESDAYS, 2/10, 4/14

TIME: 1 PM

SESSION 1: February 10, Learn to make and decorate cut-out cookies using different consistencies of royal icing. We will decorate heart-shaped Valentine cookies using different colors of icing and piping bags. You will take home a half-dozen gorgeous cookies and knowledge of how easy it is to make gorgeous one-of-a-kind cookies!

SESSION 2: April 14, Learn to make fun stylized fish decor to hang inside or outside the home. You will learn about polymer clay and decorate a fish of your own to take with you.

Old Wine in New Bottles

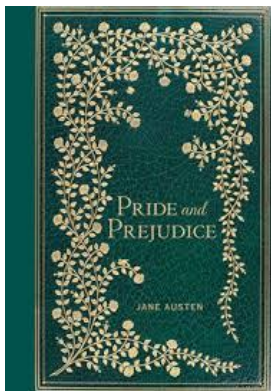


In 1966 Jean Rhys published an astonishing new novel, *Wide Sargasso Sea*, in which she retold the story of *Jane Eyre*, retold it not from Jane's perspective but from that of the "madwoman" in the attic, the first Mrs. Rochester. In Charlotte Bronte's 1847 novel, Jane is terrified of the violent woman imprisoned in the house where she had once come as a young bride. "What was *her* story?" Jean Rhys wondered? Like Jane, the first Mrs. Rochester had come to Thornfield Hall as an innocent young woman. What had happened to her? How did she become "the madwoman in the attic"?

Jean Rhys started a new tradition, a tradition of re-examination of old, familiar tales, invitations to rethink the stories that we thought we knew so well. In *Kissing the Witch: Old Tales in New Skins*, Emma Donoghue invites us to rethink familiar fairy tales in which the young hero wins the hand of the beautiful princess, and half the kingdom with her. "What does the princess think," Donoghue invites us to wonder, "about being given away?"

In this study group we are going to examine some of these stories, the stories which re-approach familiar tales. Here are some OPTIONS: please let us know which book(s) you would like to explore, and we'll shape the Study Group around the interests of its members. Days and times TBD.

- 1) *Jane Eyre* by Charlotte Bronte (1847) and *Wide Sargasso Sea* by Jean Rhys (1966)
- 2) *Great Expectations* (1860-61) by Charles Dickens and either *Jack Maggs* (1997) by Peter Carey or *Mr. Pip* (2006) by Lloyd Jones. *Jack Maggs* retells the tale from the point of view of the convict whom Pip encounters at the opening of the book, while *Mr. Pip* takes us out of the world of the book entirely, to Bougainville in the 1990s, when an Englishman takes the position of school teacher on the war-torn island, and creates a curriculum based entirely on *Great Expectations*.
- 3) *Beowulf* (ca 975-1025), the Old English tale of a hero battling a monster and its yet more monstrous mother, and *The Mere Wife* (2018) by Maria Headley, retelling the story from the point of view of the monster's mother.
- 4) *David Copperfield* (1849-1850) by Charles Dickens and *Demon Copperhead* (2022) by Barbara Kingsolver. Dickens' story is a classic bildungsroman, a tale of a young man's education from boyhood to manhood; Kingsolver updates the tale to the present, and sets it in Appalachia during the height of the addictive painkiller fiasco.
- 5) "Cinderella" and *Confessions of an Ugly Stepsister* (1999) by Gregory Maguire. Or of course we could look at *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* (1900) by L. Frank Baum and then read Maguire's *Wicked* (1995), retold from the point of view of the "wicked" witch. *Wicked* is actually based on the movie starring Judy Garland, and of course there's now a film of the musical adaptation of *Wicked*.
- 6) *Pride and Prejudice* (1813) by Jane Austen and *Longbourn* (2013) by Jo Baker. Baker invites us to consider what a powerful ripple effect a marriage of the wealthy had on the vast establishment of dependents who are so invisible in the Austen novels. The servants don't care whether or not Elizabeth and Darcy find true love: they only care about who is going to be the new master at Longbourn, and whether his bride will bring her own servants from home, or allow those who have lived in the servants' hall for all their adult lives to keep their jobs and their home.
- 7) *Kissing the Witch: Old Tales in New Skins* (1997) by Emma Donoghue is a set of linked short stories, each retelling the story of some familiar fairy tale, giving it an iconoclastic, lesbian twist and inviting us to rethink our notions of a happy ending. Sometimes, she suggests, Rapunzel is quite content to stay in her tower, and finds the prince a tiresome intruder.



Pots, Platters and Pieces

**You CAN
make
creations
from clay!**



Did you ever ask “how do they do that?” Learn techniques for making clay pieces without a wheel and without your own kiln from an experienced potter. Lynne Bell will demonstrate several of the main hand-building techniques, including image transfer, and show examples of her work. Learn about resources in the area if you want to try yourself!

DATE: TUESDAY, 12/9

TIME: 1:30 PM



Private Dick, Female Detective:

Traditionally a male-dominated space, women, whether amateur sleuths or professionals, often bring a special eye to solving crime. The ongoing importance of different elements of detective fiction makes the appearance and development of the female detective an intriguing issue. We highly recommend signing up for all (or most) sessions, as we will be comparing characters and following the evolution of the female sleuth.

DATES: THURSDAYS, 12/18, 1/22, 3/19, 4/23

TIME: 2 PM

BOOKS:

SESSION 1: December 18, *A Murder Is Announced*, by Agatha Christie (1950)

SESSION 2: January 22, *“E” Is for Evidence*, by Sue Grafton (1988)

SESSION 3: March 19, *Contents Under Pressure*, by Edna Buchanan (1992)

SESSION 4: April 23, *I’d Rather Be in Philadelphia*, by Gillian Roberts (1992)



**Script
Reading:
From Our Lips
To Your Ears**



No talent necessary! Starting in October, just some fun meetings where you can become someone else by reading scripts from TV, Broadway or movies. You might become a man, child or even a teenager. So, all you actors, come and join the fun and become someone else! DO BRING YOUR OWN BROWN BAG so we can lunch together.



DATES: THURSDAYS, (SECOND Thursday of each month): 10/9, 11/13, 12/11, 1/8, 3/12, 4/9, 5/14 (February date TBD)
TIME: 11 AM - 12:30 PM (Bring your lunch!)

**Technology
Titans:
Creativebug
and “The
Office is
OPEN!”**



Learn new computer skills or expand those you already have! These courses will focus on using the “free” Creativebug App (available through the library) and getting your technology questions answered in our “Ask Me Anything!” session called, The Office is OPEN!

In SESSION 1, you will learn to use Creativebug, an app that contains online video arts and crafts workshops. Creativebug has workshops on how to paint, knit, crochet, sew, screen print and more! In our session, we will learn to use the app and will fold and create a beautiful paper lotus flower.

In SESSIONS 2 and 3, you will be able to ask any burning questions you have about using your computer or software. Want to know how to organize and sort your email? How to use the gmail suite? How to make sure your device is secure? Why your iPad or laptop is doing that “thing” that is driving you crazy? Start formulating your questions!

DATES: MONDAY, 1/26, 2:00 PM, **THURSDAY,** 2/12, 10:30 AM, **THURSDAY,** 2/26, 10:30 AM
TIMES: 1/26: 2:00- 3:30 PM, 2/12: 10:30 AM, 2/26: 10:30 AM

-Descriptions continued next page-



(Technology Titans, cont.)

SESSION 1: January 26, 2:00-3:30 PM, Create Lotus Flowers using Creativebug. We will be guided by Dory, a library staff member, on how to make these beautiful paper flower decorations. Relax in the Blake Library's *Maker Space* while we fold our creations. Learn how to make other craft projects using the "free" Creative Bug app available through the library.

Limited to 10 participants.

SESSION 2: February 12, 10:30-11:30 AM. The Office Is Open. Ask us anything! Bring your pressing computer question(s) to the Blake Library's computer lab where "Professor" Manny will answer it. We request that you bring at least one burning issue with you for this session. Each participant will have questions and you might get an answer to other questions you have while he addresses each issue. **Limited to 10 participants.**

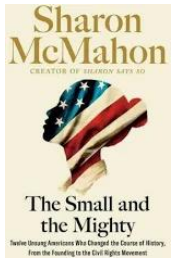
SESSION 3: February 26, 10:30-11:30 AM. Part 2 of the same offering as on February 12th for anyone who was unable to participate, or for those who have more burning questions. **Limited to 10 participants.**

Sample questions:

- How do I best protect my identity online?
- How can I manage spam emails, texts or calls?
- How can I organize my photos?
- What is two-factor authentication and should I use it?
- Is it safe to pay bills or do banking online, and what should I know about it?
- What is a password manager and how do I use one? What is a strong password?
- How do I update my phone or computer?
- Why is my device running so slowly?
- How do I connect to Wi-Fi?
- How do I know if a website is safe?
- How do I manage my Apps? How to delete them, move them around the phone?
- How to use PayPal, Venmo or Zelle, and are they safe?

Start thinking about your questions NOW! No question is silly or embarrassing!

Untaught History



Join us to learn and discuss a wide variety of historical topics NOT taught in school. Be a part of this lively, thought-provoking, and informative study group! This group is limited to 30 people.

DATES: MONDAY, 12/29, THURSDAY, 1/29, MONDAY, 2/16, MONDAY, 3/16

TIME: 1 PM

TOPICS:

SESSION 1: December 29, The Small and the Mighty.

In this session, our leader will highlight the extraordinary stories of everyday Americans who, though often overlooked in history books, played pivotal roles in shaping our society. These are not the presidents or aristocrats, but the unsung heroes—telephone operators, school teachers, and others whose contributions made a profound impact.

SESSION 2: January 29, To Be or Not to Be a Fraud!

In an odd corner of the cryptoverse, somewhere a little south of the Loch Ness Monster and a little north of the Flat-Earthers, lies the delightfully weird vale of the “Man from Stratford” deniers, the folks who insist that William Shakespeare could not possibly have written the plays attributed to him. Many distinguished luminaries have given the place a certain spurious luster—Mark Twain, for instance, was a lifelong denizen—and together we will explore the arguments for attributing Shakespeare’s plays to Christopher Marlowe, Francis Bacon, the Earl of Oxford, or Queen Elizabeth herself.

SESSION 3: February 16, Agatha Christie – The Queen of Crime. Agatha Christie is one of the most popular writers in history. Almost four billion copies of her novels have been sold around the world, and her book sales are exceeded only by the Bible and Shakespeare. We explore the adventurous and enigmatic life of the best-selling author, and the inspirations behind her writings.

SESSION 4: March 16, Lunacy and Lace: The Delicate Cruelty of Control.

"They weren't mad, they were inconvenient. A history written not in ink, but in silence by steel doors."

In this gripping session, our leader will illuminate the often-hidden history of inhumane practices. It's a story of voices lost, stories erased, and lives forever altered. Through this lens, we'll explore how these practices were buried beneath silence, power, and control. Hold on tight, as we lift the veil on a dark chapter of our past—one that was swept under the rug, but has never truly disappeared