

## Novel Club minutes February 2019

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The February 5<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Novel Club took place at Andy and Leigh Fabens' snug Cleveland Heights home. They served a generous buffet of all sorts of appetizers as well as wine. About thirty people were in attendance to discuss *Kim*, by Rudyard Kipling. The biographical paper was written by Jack Conomy, delivered in his absence by Art Stupay. The Critical paper was written and delivered by Peter Haas.

Our meeting opened with a somewhat raucous discussion of the rules of order, and there was a comment that we should be following Robert's Rules. This was fitting, as the rules were first published in 1865, the same year Kipling was born. The discussion was tabled, as this is not part of the club's bylaws, but Louise agreed to follow the traditional order of events. Louise Mooney began the meeting with a thank you to the hosts, and introduction of guests. We welcomed her guests PK and Ginger Saha. We also discussed food for the annual meeting, and took a vote on whether to use Novel Club funds to pay for boxed meals. The majority voted in favor, with one person voted against the motion on the grounds that this was never the reason or use for the dues.

The biography provided us with an outline of Kipling's life, which began in Mumbai in 1865, and ended in England in 1918. He traveled all over India, a country he loved. The bio, which can be read on the website, includes pictures of India, and quotes by and about Kipling.

The critical paper presented insights into *Kim*, a challenge, as this book was written in a bygone, colonial era. At first our discussion centered on character development, and it was generally agreed upon that there isn't much character development to speak of. A good part of the rest of the discussion had to do with colonialism, which plays a significant role in this book. Many found the language in the novel troubling in its seemingly deep condescension towards native people from India. Others saw in Kipling's writing a love for India and saw it as kind of a travelogue of the country. Mr. Saha brought particular insight to the discussion, as he is originally from India, expressing that this book presents an accurate picture of the country.

Novel club members, for the most part, did not particularly enjoy the book. Others found the story to be fascinating, as it painted a picture of a faraway land. For more of an idea of the critical paper, it is worth reading and can be found on the website. The discussion was lively and involved plenty of different perspectives and opinions.

After our discussion, we repaired back to the dining room to enjoy more treats before heading back into the cold February night.