

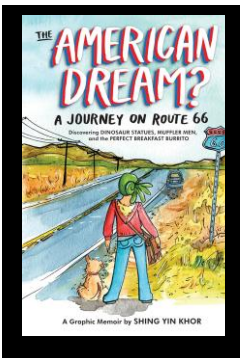
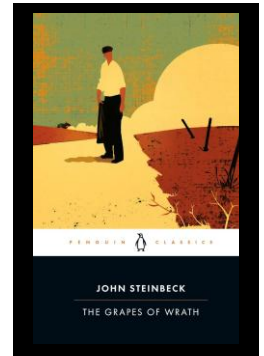


Route 66 - 100 Years on the Mother Road

2026 Spring Read Booklist

***Grapes of Wrath*, by John Steinbeck (1939)**

First published in 1939, *The Grapes of Wrath* remains one of the most enduring novels of the American experience. Steinbeck follows the Joad family as they travel Route 66 from Oklahoma to California, driven west by economic collapse and environmental disaster. The road becomes a corridor of hope and hardship, carrying thousands of displaced families searching for dignity and survival. More than a historical novel, *The Grapes of Wrath* asks timeless questions about community, responsibility, and resilience. As Route 66 turns 100, Steinbeck's portrait of migration and inequality continues to echo in contemporary conversations about labor, housing, and belonging.



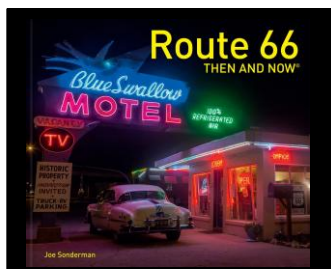
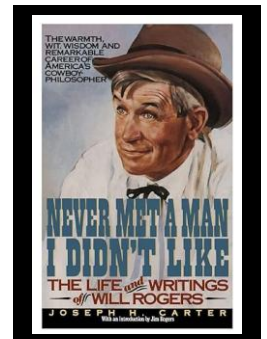
***The American Dream: A Journey on Route 66 Discovering Dinosaur Statues, Muffler Men, and the Perfect Breakfast Burrito* by Shing Yin Khor (2019)**

In this graphic memoir, artist and writer Shing Yin Khor sets out on a deeply personal journey along Route 66, interrogating what the “American Dream” means for those who have historically been excluded from it. Blending travelogue, history, and memoir, Khor explores roadside attractions, ghost towns, and personal memories while reckoning with identity, racism, and representation. Accessible, visually striking, and

emotionally resonant, *The American Dream?* reframes Route 66 as both a cultural icon and a contested space—one that reflects who has been welcomed onto the road and who has been left behind.

***Never Met a Man I Didn't Like: The Life and Writings of Will Rogers*, Joseph H. Carter, ed; intro by Jim Rogers (1991)**

Humorist, actor, and social commentator Will Rogers was one of the most recognizable voices of early 20th-century America. A native of Oklahoma and a keen observer of American life, Rogers often traveled Route 66 as it emerged as a national artery. This collection of writings captures Rogers' wit, warmth, and skepticism, offering insight into the era when Route 66 was new and the nation was redefining itself. His reflections—by turns playful and piercing—help ground the Mother Road in the everyday lives and conversations of the people who lived alongside it.



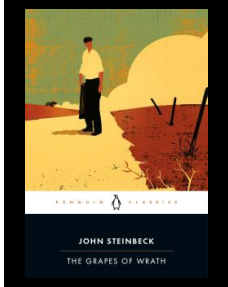
***Route 66 Then and Now* by Joe Sonderman (2018)**

Because Route 66 is such an iconic road, many listeners carry their own memories—of family trips, roadside stops, relocations, or return journeys made decades apart. This bonus book compares photos from then to now as inspiration for individual Route 66 Stories.

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2026 Spring Read Book Discussion Leaders

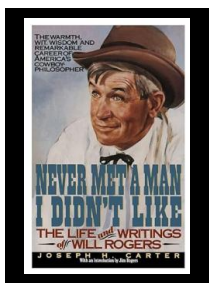
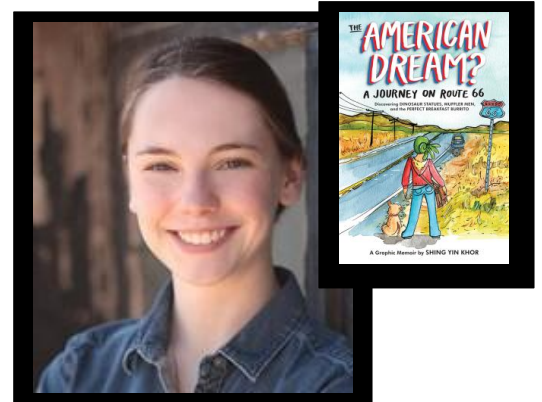


Miriam Scott is an Episcopal priest based in Amarillo, Texas, and a returning Radio Readers Book Club discussion leader. Born in Germany and now a U.S. citizen, Scott brings a transnational perspective to questions of migration, displacement, and moral responsibility—central themes in *The Grapes of Wrath*. Her previous BookBytes commentaries for HPPR have been recognized with a Kansas Assoc. of Broadcasters first-place award, reflecting her ability to connect literary texts to lived experience with clarity and compassion.



Glenda Shepard is a retired high school English teacher and longtime reader who lives on a farm in southwest Kansas. A native of the region, she was born in Elkhart, grew up in Richfield, and graduated from Rolla High School—places that resonate deeply with the landscapes and communities portrayed in *The Grapes of Wrath*. Glenda is an active participant in her local book club and enjoys sharing her love of literature through thoughtful, grounded discussion.

Lauren Pronger is the founder and owner of *Chapterhouse Books*, an independent bookstore in Amarillo that has quickly become a gathering place for readers, writers, and community members. What began as a pop-up bookstore grew into a brick-and-mortar shop on historic Route 66, reflecting Pronger's commitment to books as a way to bring people together across interests and backgrounds. As a bookseller, Pronger curates a wide range of titles—from contemporary fiction and memoir to history and graphic storytelling—encouraging thoughtful conversation and curiosity about the world. Her work with Chapterhouse Books emphasizes the role of reading in building community, making her a fitting discussion leader for a book that examines who gets to travel the Mother Road and how stories shape our understanding of belonging.



Sally Shattuck Sally Shattuck is a life-long resident of Ashland, Kansas, except for ten years spent in college, law school and living in the Washington D.C. area. She served on the HPPR board in the 1990s and for a year hosted a show called Broadway Tonight. While she enjoyed the experience, she found that 50 musicals are a lot. Sally practices law in the Ashland area. By the way, her appreciation for Will Rogers began when she was a child and has extended throughout her life.