

Dear friends,

We've got a great read for April! The book we selected is **Divided Minds: Twin Sisters and Their Journey Through Schizophrenia** by Pamela Spiro Wagner and Carolyn Spiro, MD. It's a dual memoir of identical twins, published in 2005. (BTW: I ordered a copy from Amazon and they sent me The Divided Mind, which is not our book.)

**Our next meeting will be on April 17, 2013 at the First Christian Church in Bloomington in the Sanctuary/Gathering Room from 7:00 – 8:30 pm.**

I have a couple of teasers for you because it looks like this is a book you might need to buy. It's not available at the MCPL.

My incentive to read this book came from the following paragraph that is the beginning of a review I found on line. I have twin sons, so this excerpt really spoke to me:

*"...This is an autobiographical story about growing up, starting with their (the Spiro girls) childhood, dealing with jealousy and resentment toward each other and yet a special connection between the twins. You get the privilege to watch them grow from little children, into teenagers dealing with issues as their bodies, food disorders, competing for attention and witness a stark difference between the two as they get older. The stark difference is this: Pamela starts to hear voices while Carolyn doesn't.*

*Pamela was always the successful child. The one who got better grades and was thought to be the smarter child. The more outgoing, social savvy, gifted, and passionate one out of the two. Carolyn always felt as if she lived in Pamela's shadows until the fateful day when Pamela started to crumble. As a young teenager, Pamela started to hear voices, saying that she killed JFK, among other delusions. As time passed by, she became less social, keeping her thoughts to herself with the exception of a few revelations to her twin sister..."*

Both sisters entered medical school. Pam developed schizophrenia. Carolyn became a psychiatrist. Told in the alternating voices of the sisters, describes the far reaches of madness, as well as the depths of ambivalence and love between twins. It is a true and apparently an unusually frank story of identical twins with very different identities and wildly different experiences of the world around them.

The second teaser came to me from one of our members, Sharon Pugh. It's a U-Tube clip of the two sisters giving a talk after their book came out. There is a plug for the Research Channel before the narrative starts, so don't despair that you might have copied the wrong URL. It's about 30 minutes long, but it made the images so vivid that I couldn't wait until my book came from Amazon.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lzDPlktZrGI>

One of the issues I hope we will address when we discuss this book is how one family member's illness impacts the rest of the family unit. Whether it's autism, bi-polar disease, dementia, traumatic brain injury, or a critical illness, families have to cope with the consequences: fatigue,

stigma, misinformation, anger, depression and others we will undoubtedly think of when we talk.

Have a good read, friends. I look forward to seeing you. You don't need to be a Book Club "member". You don't need to have read the book. You'll be welcome. Please note that our JUNE meeting is on June 12, not the 13 as it appeared on our year-long calendar.

With best wishes for a happy spring.

Janet