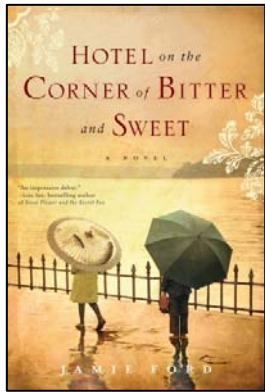


PARENT CENTER ADULT BOOK CLUB 2012 SELECTION

DISCUSSION DATE: **SATURDAY, JANUARY 21ST, 2012 @ 2PM**

"Hotel on the Corner of Bitter and Sweet" by *Jamie Ford*

Jamie Ford has written a tender and satisfying novel that is tucked into a part of Seattle history we would rather not face. Set in a time and a place lost forever, *Hotel on the*



Corner of Bitter and Sweet gives us a glimpse of the damage that is caused by war--not the sweeping damage of the battlefield, but the cold, cruel damage to the hearts and humanity of individual people. Especially relevant in today's world, this is a beautifully written book that will make you think. But, more importantly, it will make you feel.

Ford's strained debut concerns Henry Lee, a Chinese-American in Seattle who, in 1986, has just lost his wife to cancer. After Henry hears that the belongings of Japanese immigrants interned during WWII have been found in the basement of the Panama Hotel, the narrative shuttles between 1986 and the 1940s in a predictable story that chronicles the losses of old age and the bewilderment of youth. Henry recalls the difficulties of life in America during WWII, when he and his Japanese-American school friend, Keiko, wandered through wartime Seattle. Keiko and her family are later interned in a camp, and Henry, horrified by America's anti-Japanese hysteria, is further conflicted because of his Chinese father's anti-Japanese sentiment. Henry's adult life in 1986 is rather mechanically rendered, and Ford clumsily contrasts Henry's difficulty in communicating with his college-age son, Marty, with Henry's own alienation from his father, who was determined to Americanize him. The wartime persecution of Japanese immigrants is presented well.

Jamie Ford is the great-grandson of Nevada mining pioneer Min Chung, who emigrated in 1865 from Kaiping, China, to San Francisco, where he adopted the Western name "Ford," thus confusing countless generations. Ford is an award-winning short-story writer.



The discussion will be held at:

North Branch Public Library, 3455 Madison Avenue, Bridgeport CT