

TAB Club Book Report – October 9, 2026

Four of us came together this morning to talk about *The Free World* by David Bezmozgis. We enjoyed the authentic account of Soviet Jewish refugees stuck in Rome waiting for visas and how they survived and thrived. The characters were varied and interesting. Some readers felt the narrative dragged in the middle or missed having a traditional plot climax.

As always, the book inspired a wide-ranging conversation. We shared family migration stories reflecting on the culture shock immigrants faced and the nostalgia some felt for the "old country". We discussed the realities of crowded living conditions, the practicalities of rabbinic compromises, and the debates over tradition and identity.

Looking Ahead:

We spent some time considering titles for upcoming meetings and came up with five possibilities to consider:

***The Art of the Jewish Family* by Laura Arnold Liebman** – A nonfiction work tracing early Jewish-American history and women's lives through five material objects, featuring a fascinating chapter about the daughter of an enslaved woman and a Jewish landowner who joined elite New York society.

***Autobiography of Red* by Anne Carson** – A novel in verse by the acclaimed Canadian author, reimagining an ancient Greek myth. At roughly 150 pages, it may be intellectually adventurous, but it's a quick, short read!

***Mr. Moonlight: The Biography of Brian Epstein* by Philip Norman** – A lively look at the life and tragic early death of the Beatles' legendary manager, offering a vivid window into the 1960s music scene.

***Exit Party* by Emily St. John Mandel** – We discussed picking up the latest acclaimed release from the Vancouver Island-born science fiction author as an engaging, accessible option.

***Kitchen Confidential* by Anthony Bourdain** – Bourdain's wildly entertaining memoir pulling back the curtain on the culinary world.

Please take a look and let us know if there are any you think we should skip. If there are no objections I'll add them all to our schedule.

Happy reading, and I look forward to seeing everyone next time!