The two books discussed today were *Bottle of Lies* by Katherine Eban (non-fiction) and *Ellis Island: a people’s history* by Malgorzata Szejnert (non-fiction).

Tom Butler introduced *Bottle of Lies*, an explosive investigation of the generic drug boom that reveals fraud and life threatening dangers on a global basis. Drawing on accounts from whistleblowers and regulators as well as FDA confidential documents the author showcases an industry where fraud is rampant and companies routinely falsify data. As an example the author focuses on the various manufacturing facilities of a large company in India that changed, omitted and hid numerous questionable findings, but shows how this fraud is widespread among offshore countries. The result is patients unwittingly use medicines with unpredictable and dangerous results. Eban also describes the difficulty the FDA has in monitoring these foreign products that have turned one of the world’s greatest health innovations into too many swindles. The findings were a distressing unveiling to our group, many of whom depend on generics for our well being.

Next up was *Ellis Island: a people’s history*, summarized by Vince Tortorelli. Here the author covers both sides of the process of admitting foreigners into the United States, those that arrived seeking a new life and those medical and administrative people who processed them when they arrived. It draws on unpublished testimonies, memoirs, archival photographs and correspondence from internees and workers to present a more personal side to the experience beyond the massive undertaking that processed 16.6 million people from the day it opened in 1892 to its closure in 1954. The book illustrates the hopes and dreams of the arrivals as well as their disappointments as some families were broken up when a members was sent back because of health problems. A point was made by some that the book was not necessarily an easy, flowing read that might have been due to the author’s writing style and perhaps of its translation.

Books for November:

*Kitty Genovese* by Kevin Cook (non-fiction). The tragic story of the Queens, NY murder that gained long term public exposure after it was covered by the New York Times and other news outlets that nobody came to her aid as she was stabbed to death despite her frantic calls for help and nobody intervened.

*A Gentleman in Moscow* by Amor Towles (fiction). A young Russian aristocrat is deemed unrepentant by a Bolshevik tribunal in 1922 and forced to be held in a hotel room. However, he unexpectedly enters a new, larger world as he meets others in the hotel with a large cast of interesting characters.

Books for December:

* Bugsy Siegel* by Michael Shnayerson (non-fiction). The life of the brutal Jewish Mafia gangster who rose from poor Ukraine parents to a kingdom of his own in Las Vegas.
The Fires of Jubilee: Nate Turner’s Fierce Rebellion by Stephen B. Oates (non-fiction). Recounts the bloody slave rebellion in 1831 Virginia and the savage reprisals that followed.