



*Delmarva Discussions*

# *One World, Many Voices*

Reading Discussion series available from Delmarva Discussions, Inc.






Delmarva Discussions is a private, non-profit organization. Programs are funded, in part by the Delaware Division of Libraries and the Delaware Center for the Book.



## Two Decades of Quality Book Discussion Programs

Going strong since 1984, Delmarva Discussions is a unique book discussion program. We are the only program sponsoring series themes developed and led by over one-hundred scholars from the Delmarva Peninsula. And we're unique in other ways.

-  No other reading program serves all of Delaware as well as the Eastern Shore regions of Maryland and Virginia.
-  No other program offers series that are specifically tailored to the Delmarva Peninsula
-  And no other program offers the kind of assistance to busy site staff that we do! Scheduling and paying scholars, creating flyers and brochures, writing press releases, designing ads, and applying for grants are just some of the things we do to make your programming job easier!

With decades of service to the communities on the Delmarva peninsula and hundreds of discussions, we look forward to encouraging reading, expanding cultural horizons, and connecting the community well into the future.

**Learn more inside** ▶▶▶▶▶

## A Unique Book Discussion Program

Delmarva Discussions is a nonprofit organization offering scholar-led book discussion series at libraries, retirement homes, museums, and other sites throughout Delaware and the Eastern Shore areas of Maryland and Virginia.

Book reading groups are valuable for community development and common understanding. They encourage participants to read and to share their love of reading, their values, and their life experiences with others. They also bring people into your site to explore other activities and programs you have available to them and the community.

And Delmarva Discussions has improved upon the typical book discussion series by developing innovative themes which provide a structure for exploring important issues and for appreciating and understanding literature; they also enhance lifelong learning and encourage independent reading. In addition, we provide the books, flyers, brochures, press releases, the experts to facilitate the discussions, and financial assistance!



## Share Your Programming Workload

We can help you like no other program offered! We work with you to choose an appropriate topic and dates for the series. We ship the books to you, select and schedule discussion leaders who are experts from across the region. These discussion leaders provide context without lecturing; the emphasis is always on discussion and exploration. Then, you and Delmarva Discussions work to advertise the group with publicity materials provided by us.

Participants sign up for the series at your site. Every two weeks, they will check out and read one of the series titles, then attend a discussion of the book. Depending on the programming you choose, they may also use other avenues to explore the books in a series. You provide a comfortable space, introduction for the scholar, refreshments, and request evaluations from participants at the end of each discussion program. Of course, all forms are provided!

When the series is over, complete your evaluation form, ship the books and forms back to us and get ready for another program!

## Themes and Programs for All Interests

Delmarva Discussions offers a variety of series designed to capture the imagination and interest of the audience. This catalogue will help you to decide which programming and series works for you! Our programming includes:

### Still the Best on Delmarva! *Our Original Programming*

Delmarva Discussions scholar-led book discussion programs bring a variety of writing styles, topics, and authors to Delmarva readers. The successful format, which includes the audience as part of the programming through the discussion, combines enthusiastic readers and great works of literature with the best scholars and presenters in the region. This interactive programming allows the audience to participate, voice opinions, share life experiences and, most importantly, get the most out of reading. Our original series are available in 3 and 5 book formats.

### Reading The Arts

*Reading the Arts* programs differ from our original series in that these programs concentrate on the artistic endeavor of writing. In addition to discussion of the book, sessions include a workshop environment with writing exercises. Although participants will still be reading books, and discussing them with qualified discussion leaders, these books concentrate on the art of writing and the scholars are writers and poets themselves, offering not only insights in the works, but leading participants through the choices and decisions writers make. Writing exercises round out each program. *Reading the Arts* series are available in 3 and 5 book formats.

### Watching Books

Delmarva Discussions and the Rehoboth Beach Film Society combine resources to present programs in Sussex County. Residents have an entertaining forum for developing new avenues for discussion using two of the most prevalent mediums - books and film. Side-by-side discussion of film and literature can lead to a deeper understanding of our complex society than simply "watching movies" or "reading books". This program is an exchange between the reader/viewer, the scholar, the group, and the author/filmmaker, allowing for consensus and common understanding of complex issues. *Watching Books* series are available in a 2 book/film format.

### Check inside for all the themes available!



Delmarva Discussions also loans multiple copies of titles for your own program development. Call or e-mail for more information!



## Interested?

Contact Bethany Hacker, Project Director at  
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4142 Ogleton-Stanton Road #239  
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or e-mail [bhacker@delmarvadisussions.org](mailto:bhacker@delmarvadisussions.org)  
or go online and reserve a series at  
[www.delmarvadisussions.org](http://www.delmarvadisussions.org)

## ...And Justice for All?

Is there a distinction between law and justice? What effect does vigilantism have on the law and on the vigilantes themselves? What drives people to violent crime – and how closely can we understand the minds of violent criminals? What should we do when what we know is right conflicts with what the law says is right?

From criminal acts to civil disobedience, vigilante justice to courts of law, this series examines justice from a variety of perspectives using fiction, nonfiction and drama.

### John Grisham, *A Time to Kill*

This novel focuses on the defense of a Southern black man who takes justice into his own hands to avenge himself on the white men who brutally raped his ten-year-old daughter.

### Walter Van Tilburg Clark, *The Ox-Bow Incident*

This western classic examines the social issues that give rise to vigilantism and provides insights into vigilantism's effects on both its victims and on the vigilantes themselves.

### Truman Capote, *In Cold Blood*

This documentary account of the murder of the Clutter family in Kansas in 1959 allows the reader to know both victims and murderers intimately.

### Jerome Lawrence and Robert E. Lee, *Inherit the Wind*

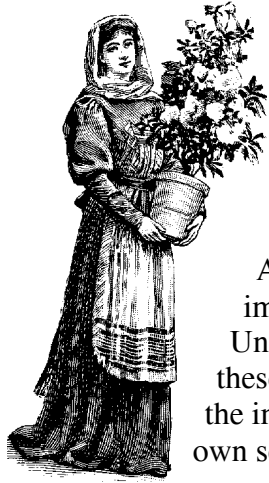
Based on the Scopes Monkey Trial, this play illustrates the use of the courts as a forum for examining and evaluating our changing ideas and philosophies.

### Sophocles, *Antigone*

The issues raised in this play written more than two millennia ago are still being examined today, including whether we should conform to civil law when it conflicts with our understandings and beliefs about responsibility to a "higher law."



## Becoming American



In 1782, Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur, a French immigrant to America, asked in one of his *Letters from an American Farmer* a question that continues to resonate in the United States: “What is an American?”

This series explores the process of becoming American through the representative experiences of immigrant writers from the diverse cultures of the United States. Through reading and discussion of these works, participants will gain an understanding of the immigrant experience. They will also clarify their own sense of American values and ideals as they develop an answer to de Crèvecoeur’s crucial question.

### **Anzia Yeziarska, *Bread Givers***

This novel tells the story of Sara Smolinsky’s struggle to free herself from the restrictions imposed on women in a Russian Orthodox Jewish family that emigrates to New York City at the turn of the twentieth century.

### **Julia Alvarez, *How the Garcia Girls Lost Their Accents***

Using the unusual narrative strategy of telling the story backwards—beginning with the return of one of four sisters to her native Dominican Republic many years after her family’s immigration to the United States—this touching and comic novel details the Garcia girls’ assimilation into American culture.

### **Gish Jen, *Typical American***

When Yifeng comes to America to study engineering, he intends to earn his degree and return to his native China. But soon he has changed his name to Ralph Chang, been joined by his ambitious sister Theresa, and finds himself married to a perfect American wife and pursuing the American dream.

### **Chang-rae Lee, *Native Speaker***

Henry Parks works undercover in New York City. He’s a natural—quiet, watchful, secretive, distant. He acquired these traits as a child, when he grew up the only Korean boy in an all-American suburb.

### **Jhumpa Lahiri, *The Namesake***

The Ganguli family, new arrivals from Calcutta, is bent on becoming American even as everyone pines for home. The name they bestow on their first born, Gogol, betrays all the conflicts of honoring tradition in a new world, and these conflicts will haunt Gogol on his own winding path through divided loyalties, comic detours, and difficult arrivals.

## The Chesapeake Bay: End of an Era

We all know that our region is changing because of human activity – we see it around us every day. But what kind of impact are these changes having on the animal and plant life of the area? How do they affect the people who make their living off the land? And what about everyone else who lives here? This series explores the answers to these questions and many more.

### **John Wennersten, *Maryland’s Eastern Shore***

This book charts the evolution of both the region and its people and characterizes the lifestyle of the Eastern Shoreman.

### **Gilbert Byron, *Done Crabbin’***

This novel tells a story of growing up on the Chester River during the halcyon days prior to World War I.

### **Curtis Badger, *Salt Tide***

This book’s engrossing description of marshes and inlets is both ecological writing and memoir of a family’s love for the Eastern Shore.

### **Tom Horton, *Bay Country***

These essays by a veteran environmental reporter provide a disturbing portrait of an estuary in decline under the pressure of a burgeoning population.

### **George Alfred Townsend, *The Entailed Hat***

This historical novel weaves fact and exceptional description into the stories of the development of the Iron Furnace near Snow Hill, the kidnapping of slaves by the Patty Cannon gang, and the unusual story of a hat willed to its owner’s descendants.



## The Colonial Life

Colonial Williamsburg receives complaints each year - Why don't you keep up the paint on the frame buildings so they look nicer? Why are so many of the people in plain clothing? The streets are unpaved and the cobblestones are hard to walk on! The goal of authenticity is often thwarted by the demands of a modern population who prefer a gentler version of history. This series allows us to take off our rose colored glasses and experience the superstitions, hardships, and uncertainty of Colonial America.

**J. Hector St. John de Crevecoeur, Albert E. Stone, *Letters from an American Farmer and Sketches of Eighteenth-Century America***

Published in 1782, *Letters from an American Farmer* paints a vivid portrait of the American scene, from New England seafaring life to Southern plantation culture. More popular abroad than at home, the work provided Europeans with their chief impression of American landscapes, peoples, institutions, values, and problems.

**Robert R. McCammon, *Speaks the Nightbird***

In 1699, legal clerk Matthew Corbett accompanies magistrate Isaac Woodward to Fount Royal, Carolina, where he has been summoned to decide whether a witch is living in the newly established settlement. Full of historical detail, re-creating the legal procedures, medical practices, and everyday existence of the time.

**Cecilia M. Kenyon, *Men of Little Faith: The Anti-Federalists on the Nature of Representative Government***

During a scholarly career that extended from the late 1940s to the mid-1980s, Cecilia Kenyon wrote a series of essays and reviews that reshaped thinking about the American Revolution and its aftermath.

**Nathaniel Hawthorne, *The Scarlet Letter***

Hawthorne's masterpiece about Hester Prynne, hapless victim of sin, guilt and hypocrisy in Puritan New England.

**James Thomas Flexner, *Washington: The Indispensable Man***

The author unflinchingly paints a portrait of Washington: slave owner, brave leader, man of passion, reluctant politician, and fierce general.



## Dark Bargain

The "Nation" was composed of competing cultures and social values before the Constitution was written. Bringing these opposing interests together in the Constitution was one of the greatest feats the Founding Fathers accomplished in establishing the United States. It incorporated the opinions of the Framers and all of the interests they represented, including provisions for slavery. This series examines the competing interests of slavery and race relations from the framing of the Constitution through the 19th century.

**T. H. Breen and Stephen Innes, *Myne Owne Ground: Race and Freedom on Virginia's Eastern Shore 1640-1676***

This history focuses on the changing social forces in Virginia that allowed black families to escape bondage but pushed their descendants into slavery.

**Lawrence Goldstone, *Dark Bargain: Slavery, Profits and the Struggle for the Constitution***

Goldstone chronicles the forging of the Constitution through the prism of the crucial compromises made by men consumed with the needs of the slave economy.

**Julie Winch, *A Gentleman of Color: The Life of James Forten***

This critical biography, the first serious work on his life and legacy, not only restores him to his rightful place in American history, but also presents readers with an invigorating and challenging new portrait of pre- and post-Revolutionary race relations and identities.

**Roger W. Wilkins, *Jefferson's Pillow: The Founding Fathers and the Dilemma of Black Patriotism***

Roger Wilkins asks, "Can I embrace founders who may have 'owned' some of my ancestors?" Wilkins's ringing affirmation of his dual loyalties offers an extraordinarily thoughtful and illuminating meditation on American history, in which he weaves family traditions and personal experience to form a deeply moving testament that is part history and part autobiography.

**Charles Chestnutt, *The Marrow of Tradition***

Based upon the Wilmington, NC, race riot of 1898 and written in 1901, this historical novel makes a plea for racial justice.

This series was developed with funds from the Delaware Humanities Forum, a state agency of the National Endowment for the Humanities.



## Finding the Writer Within *A Reading the Arts Series*

Everyone has a story to tell. If you like to journal or write letters, or have ever wanted to write your own autobiography, this series is for you. We'll read five different memoirs, set in different places and at different time periods and explore how their authors went about turning their lives into literature. Then we'll look at how you can do the same.



Sessions will include tips on how to use letters and journals to write memoir, explorations of the importance of evoking place and time in memoir writing, and writing exercises.

### **Eudora Welty, *One Writer's Beginnings***

Examine how Welty's descriptions of small-town life are made interesting and how to apply some of the same techniques she uses to describe your own childhood.

### **Mary Karr, *The Liar's Club***

How can we get at the truths in our families, especially if the people who know them don't want to share? Is it possible to tell our stories from the perspective of ourselves as children? Karr's book shows us how to do both.

### **Tobias Wolff, *This Boy's Life***

What if you weren't a loveable character as a child— would anyone want to read your memoir? Explore how Tobias Wolff honestly exposes his own failings but ultimately creates a sympathetic and reliable narrator.

### **Bebe Moore Campbell, *Sweet Summer: Growing Up With and Without My Dad***

This is the story of a young African American girl growing up in a divided family and a divided nation at the cusp of the Civil Rights movement. Examine how to use larger political events for context in personal narrative.

### **Lisa Roney, *Sweet Invisible Body***

The author of this memoir describes growing up with diabetes and the ways it did — and did not — set her apart. Discover what it is about your own experience that sets you apart and how you can use this to tell your story.

## Food, Glorious Food



Why write about food? In response to this question (which she says she was often asked) MFK Fisher wrote:

“It seems to me that our three basic needs, for food and security and love, are so mixed and mingled and entwined that we cannot straightly think of one without the others. So it happens that when I write of hunger, I am really writing about love and the hunger for it, and warmth and the love of it and the hunger for it... and then the warmth and richness and fine reality of hunger satisfied...and it is all one.”

This program will explore some of the many different ways to write about the nourishment — physical and otherwise — that food provides. We'll look at various ways that writers incorporate food into their writing, from philosophical explorations of how to be a gourmand to food and travel to fiction that uses food as a central theme. Be prepared to have your taste buds tempted.

### **MFK Fisher, *The Gastronomical Me***

From the story of her first oyster to reminiscences about the best thing she ever tasted, the great food writer uses food to tell the story of her life in a series of essays.

### **Jean-Anthelme Brillat-Savarin, *The Physiology of Taste***

First published in France in 1825, this classic book is the first to reflect on the then-new trend of gourmandism. Readers will enjoy stories, recipes, and reflections on taste, diet, weight, and digestion.

### **Sallie Tisdale, *The Best Thing I Ever Tasted***

A mixture of food history, memoir, and sociology, this book looks at past and present American attitudes toward food and how they affect all of us.

### **Anik See, *A Taste for Adventure***

The author of this travel narrative has traveled all over the world, sampling food and using it to connect with people wherever she goes. Recipes are included.

### **Joanne Harris, *Chocolat***

A modern fable set in a chocolate shop in France, this story of temptation will leave your mouth watering.

## For Grown Ups Only: Children's Literature Revisited

We all have books we know and remember fondly from childhood, but unless we are reading aloud to children, we may not have read them for years. Why would any adult want to re-read a tale they loved when they were small?

Like books for adults, children's books tell us about the society that created them. Many books for children deal with important "adult" topics such as friendship, the role of women in society, and even death. Bringing the insights life has taught us to our favorite children's stories can help answer serious personal and intellectual questions. The books in this series revisit some classics you probably remember and a few you may have missed.

**Iona Opie and Peter Opie, *the Classic Fairy Tales* and Ethel Johnston Phelps, *Tatterhood and Other Tales***

These old favorites have some surprises for modern readers.

**Louisa May Alcott, *Little Women***

This endearing novel provides some startling insights into nineteenth-century American life.

**Kenneth Grahame, *The Wind in the Willows***

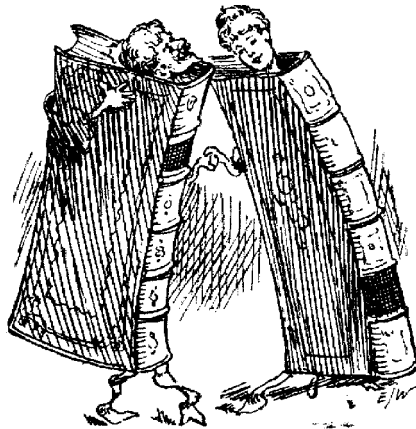
These bedtime stories and letters written to the author's daughter portray a fantasy world.

**E.B. White, *Charlotte's Web* and Katherine Paterson, *Bridge to Terabithia***

Both of these novels explore the realities of life, each probing the issues of friendship and death.

**Mildred Taylor, *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry* and Robert Cormier, *I Am the Cheese***

These two contemporary novels demonstrate dramatic changes in children's books in the twentieth century.



## From Boys to Men

The journey into manhood has been explored many times over the ages in every form of literature. But what exactly does "manhood" mean? This series looks at five different American novels and the way they handle the movement from boyhood into manhood.

**Mark Twain, *Huckleberry Finn***

Traveling down the Mississippi with an escaped slave, Huck learns about hypocrisy and the dignity and worth of human life.

**F. Scott Fitzgerald, *The Great Gatsby***

Jay Gatsby struggles to become the man he thinks his true love wants him to be.

**J.D. Salinger, *The Catcher in the Rye***

Holden Caulfield is arguably the most famous literary teenager to ever come of age. Is he deserving of this glory?

**Judith Guest, *Ordinary People***

The death of his brother in an accident leaves a young man struggling to survive. Explore how he and his father come to terms with what has happened.

**Cormac McCarthy, *All the Pretty Horses***

The tale of John Grady Cole, who at sixteen finds himself at the end of a long line of Texas ranchers, cut off from the only life he has ever imagined for himself. With two companions, he sets off for Mexico on a sometimes idyllic, sometimes comic journey along which he learns about survival, loyalty, death, and love.



## The Great Pretenders

From assumed identities to switches at birth, dramas have long relied on the tool of pretense to drive their plots and reveal insights about the human condition – or simply to give the audience a good laugh. This series explores five different plays that center on both knowing and unknowing mistakes in identity.

### **Sophocles, *Oedipus Rex***

An unwitting pretender, it is Oedipus' relentless search for truth that ultimately leads to his downfall.

### **William Shakespeare, *Othello***

Iago pretends to be Othello's friend – the end result is murder.

### **Molière, *Tartuffe***

A religious hypocrite worms his way into a 17th-century French household through pretend piety.

### **Henrik Ibsen, *A Doll's House***

Nora has committed forgery and lied to her husband to save him – but can she save herself?

### **Oscar Wilde, *The Importance of Being Earnest***

No one in this light comedy is quite who he seems, but all is resolved in the end.



## I Do Solemnly Swear: Presidential Elections and The Presidency

What makes a President? Is it the man or the package? The office, the people, or the media? In more than 200 years, only 43 men have made it to this high office and all of them offered something different to the country. This series looks at presidential elections and the modern realities so far removed from George Washington's time.

### **Lewis L. Gould, *The Modern American Presidency***

If there is a common theme in his survey of presidents from McKinley to George W. Bush, it may be that the demands of the office have become too broad for anyone to be truly successful. This is a concise, intelligent survey of the transformations of the White House over the past century.

### **Joe McGinniss, *The Selling of the President, 1968***

This 1969 classic showed television's power in packaging a politician into a product like a bar of soap. In the 30-plus years since its publication, the book still resonates with what remains the most formidable challenge for a candidate: image control.

### **Jeff Greenfield, *The People's Choice***

A deft satiric spin to a cautionary tale about the electing of the U.S. president.

### **Richard Ben Cramer, *What It Takes: The Way to the White House***

By delving into the lives of these men—George Bush, Robert Dole, Gary Hart, Richard Gephardt, Joseph Biden, and Michael Dukakis—Cramer allows the reader to experience palpably what it feels like to run for president in 1992.

### **James Ceasar and Andrew Busch, *The Perfect Tie: The True Story of the 2000 Presidential Election***

The story of one of the nation's most unusual and perhaps most bizarre elections. In 2000, for the first time, the electorate was evenly divided between Republicans and Democrats; but a full third of the electorate, the "floating voters," were undecided. The trick for Gore or for Bush would have been to maintain their party bases, which both did, while capturing a good percentage of the floating voters, which both failed to do. Hence, the closeness of the election, the (almost) perfect tie.



## Jim Crow's Children



With the 19<sup>th</sup> century Separate Car Act came an explosion of “separate but equal” laws and court challenges to the laws. After decades of Jim Crow Laws, courts finally concluded that separate could not be equal and, with the Supreme Court decision on *Brown v. Board of Education*, segregation turned to integration. The more than one hundred year history and modern legacy of segregation in America’s schools is chronicled through this series.

### **Keith Weldon Medley, *We As Freemen: Plessy v. Ferguson***

This largely forgotten case established segregation as the law of the land and prefigures both Rosa Parks’ defiance of bus segregation in Alabama and the legal arguments of *Brown v. Board of Education*.

### **Melba Patillo Beals, *Warriors Don’t Cry: A Searing Memoir of the Battle to Integrate Little Rock’s Central High***

They didn’t start out being known as the Little Rock Nine but now they are in America’s history books together.

### **Peter H. Irons, *Jim Crow’s Children: The Broken Promise of the Brown Decision***

This engaging, insightful work covers the 150-year struggle to realize the ideal of equality in public education and demonstrates that the struggle continues

### **Juan Williams, *Thurgood Marshall: American Revolutionary***

The biography of the first black U.S. Supreme Court Justice captures Marshall’s irreverent, courageous and uncompromising personality.

### **Martha Southgate, *Fall of Rome***

Delving deeply into issues of self-hatred, race, and class, this novel is told through the voices of three characters: classics teacher Jerome Washington and new student Rashid Bryson, both African American, and Jana Hansen, a white teacher newly arrived at the predominantly white boys’ school in New England.

## Justice by Death A Watching Books Series

*Revenge is a kind of wild justice, which the more a man's nature runs to, the more ought law to weed it out.* - Sir Francis Bacon

Is there a distinction between law and justice? Does revenge play a part in justice? Is death a fair punishment? Explore historical notions of “right” and put your feelings on the death penalty and vigilantism in perspective. Using classic stories told through the written word and the visual medium of film, this series captures concepts of American justice in the news today.



### **Walter Van Tilburg Clark, *The Ox-Bow Incident***

This western classic examines the social issues that give rise to vigilantism and provides insights into vigilantism’s effects on both its victims and on the vigilantes themselves.

*The Ox-Bow Incident* a film by William A. Wellman  
The 1943 western starring Henry Fonda and Dana Andrews.

### **Truman Capote, *In Cold Blood***

This documentary account of the murder of the Clutter family in Kansas in 1959 allows the reader to know both victims and murderers intimately.

*In Cold Blood* a film by Richard Brooks  
The disturbing 1967 film starring Robert Blake and Scott Wilson.

*Watching Books* programs are presented in partnership with the Rehoboth Beach Film Society (incorporated 1998), a 501(c)(3) organization whose mission is to promote film as an art form through community outreach and educational film initiatives for all ages. Correspondingly the Film Society connects diversified audiences to the cinematic arts by presenting thought-provoking, educational, and entertaining films through a broad scope of community-based programs. [www.rehobothfilm.com](http://www.rehobothfilm.com)



## King Arthur's Court *A Watching Books Series*

Literature and films are filled with fantasy and history and the two combined. There are few subjects which utilizes this fusion as well as the tales of King Arthur's Court. From comedy to drama to satire, starting well back in history into more modern time, the story of King Arthur and his knights has been told through the ages and in many styles. These series gives one a taste of the range using serious and not so serious examples.

### **Mark Twain, *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court***

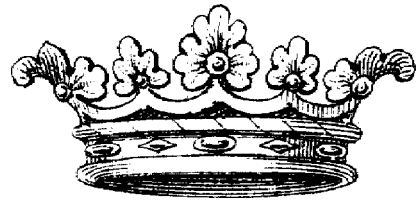
This novel used the legendary medieval court to satirize contemporary American society.

### *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court* a film by Tay Garnett

The 1949 musical reflects the feel-good peacetime era of the US with one of film histories biggest draws, Bing Crosby.

### **Sir Thomas Malory, *Le Morte D'Arthur***

In 1470 a rogue nobleman completed the original version and model for King Arthur and his court while in prison. Malory introduces elements already entrenched in British folklore, and brings in other Arthur-related stories from elsewhere on the continent creating a somewhat cohesive single narrative.



### *Excalibur* a film by John Boorman

The 1981 film takes the legend seriously and brings to life all of the drama, romance, deceit, and betrayal of Malory's novel. It stars Nigel Terry and Helen Mirren.



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## The Many Realms of King Arthur

Whether it's Walt Disney or Monty Python, a Broadway musical or a bestselling book, the myth of King Arthur still holds sway in our culture today. Told as a religious quest, a love triangle, a tale of chivalry, a bawdy romp – this classic story still fascinates artists of every medium.

But it is in the realm of literature that perhaps the greatest variation on the Arthurian tale is to be found. This series explores some of the many different forms this story has taken over the centuries and looks at why it continues to both fascinate and instruct.

### **Sir Thomas Malory, *Le Morte D'Arthur***

In 1470 a knight completed the original version and model for King Arthur.

### **Alfred, Lord Tennyson, *Idylls of the King***

These poems influenced portrayals of Arthur promoted chivalric values for educating young boys.

### **Mark Twain, *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court***

This novel used a medieval court to satirize contemporary society.

### **T. H. White, *The Once and Future King***

This novel concentrates on the effects of education and nurture on human nature and deals with the clash between right and might.

### **Robertson Davies, *The Lyre of Orpheus***

A reenactment of the Arthurian myth that allows the characters to flourish and changes the tragic ending into a happy one.



## The Modern Poet *A Reading the Arts Series*

### *The Modern Poet*

*Whatever it is, it must have*

*A stomach that can digest*

*Rubber, coal, uranium, moons, poems.*

*Like the shark, it contains a shoe.*

*It must swim for miles through the desert*

*Uttering cries that are almost human.*

-- Louis Simpson

The poets and poems selected for the series convey the ongoing struggle to create a poetic landscape that is uniquely and peculiarly American. Each session will focus either on a group of poets connected through similar life experiences or/and aesthetics, or on a particular theme. Discussions will engage matters of content and form, and will provide tips and strategies for those interested in writing poetry.

***Contemporary American Poetry***, 7th edition, **Editors Al Poulin and Michael Waters**

### **Session 1: The African American Woman's Experience**

Lucille Clifton, Rita Dove, Gwendolyn Brooks, Marilyn Nelson

### **Session 2: The Confessional Poet**

Robert Lowell, Sylvia Plath, Anne Sexton, W.D. Snodgrass

### **Session 3: The "Other" in America**

Li-Young Lee, Ai, Louise Erdrich, Naomi Shihab Nye

### **Session 4: Coming of Age**

Elizabeth Bishop, Stephen Dunn, William Heyen, Andrew Hudgins, Donald Justice, Gary Soto, William Stafford, C.D. Wright, James Wright, C.K. Williams, Elizabeth Spires, Stanley Kunitz

### **Session 5: Filial and other family relationships**

Robert Hayden, Theodore Roethke, Stephen Dobyns, William Mathews, Denise Levertov, Galway Kinnell, Donald Justice, Marvin Bell, Sharon Olds, Louis Simpson, William Stafford, Gerald Stern, Richard Wilbur, Robert Bly, Michael Harper, Philip Levine, Mary Oliver

This program is made possible, in part, by a grant from the Delaware Division of the Arts, a state agency dedicated to nurturing and supporting the arts in Delaware, in partnership with the National Endowment for the Arts.



## The Peculiar Institution and Race Relations

Racial segregation, discrimination, and degradation are no accidents in this nation's history. They stem logically from the legacy the Founding Fathers bestowed upon contemporary America with regard to the treatment of African-Americans. This tragedy has left the country with a weak foundation. Didn't they realize the effect their actions would have on the growing nation? One can only speculate that, no, they didn't realize, and we as Americans, through all of our 200+ years, still have a hard time with the concept of Equality for All.



These titles explore slavery and its legacy, from freedom to enslavement, abolition to aspirations of the "American Dream".

**T. H. Breen and Stephen Innes**, *Myne Owne Ground: Race and Freedom on Virginia's Eastern Shore 1640-1676*

This history focuses on the changing social forces in Virginia that allowed black families to escape bondage but pushed their descendants into slavery.

**Harriet Beecher Stowe**, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*

The classic abolitionist novel written prior to the Civil War.

**Jeffery Lent**, *The Marrow of Tradition*

Based upon the Wilmington, NC, race riot of 1898 and written in 1901, this historical novel makes a plea for racial justice.

**Ralph Ellison**, *Invisible Man*

A lasting masterpiece of American literature. It chronicles the existential journey of an unnamed black man attempting to discover his identity and role in a hostile and confusing world that refuses to acknowledge his existence.

**Lorraine Hansberry**, *Raisin in the Sun*

The "movin' on up" morality play of the 1960s, *Raisin* accurately reflected the aspirations of a newly nascent black middle class.

## Rogues' Gallery: The Folks You Love to Hate



Where would we be without the scoundrels, monsters, murderers, and rascals that populate our fiction and drama? With no bad guy to beat, our heroes and heroines would lead dull lives, unable to prove their virtue.

And who hasn't secretly sided with the bad guys every now and then? Fictional heroes may reflect an idealized image of society but it takes villains to reveal the failure of values and provoke both fear – and fascination. This series explores the dark side of some famous stories.

### **William Shakespeare, *Othello***

The villain Iago destroys the Moor of Venice and his bride without any comprehensible motive.

### **Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein***

Victor Frankenstein creates a monstrous creature using modern science and then abandons him to an uncaring world.

### **Edgar Allen Poe, *William Wilson, The Black Cat, The Tell-Tale Heart, and The Cask of Amontillado***

These four brief tales allow readers to explore what it feels like to be a villain as the tormented storytellers describe the minute details of their crime.

### **Henrik Ibsen, *Hedda Gabler***

A ruthless woman trapped in a loveless marriage manipulates those around her to get what she wants.

### **Thomas Harris, *The Silence of the Lambs***

Before there was Anthony Hopkins as Hannibal Lecter, there was this book.

## Scarlet Women: Rebel Heroines in Literature

What does it mean to be a “bad girl”? How does the definition of a rebel heroine vary according to the culture and time period she lives in? Why are we always so fascinated with heroines who break the rules? And what do these rules say about us and our attitude toward women? Examine these questions as you follow the stories – and very different endings – of some of literature's most notorious scarlet women.

### **Nathaniel Hawthorne, *The Scarlet Letter***

Literature's most famous adulteress, Hester Prynne is shamed in front of her entire community but refuses to name her child's father.

### **Margaret Mitchell, *Gone With the Wind***

The prototypical bad girl, Scarlett O'Hara breaks all the conventions of Southern society – and gets away with it.

### **Edith Wharton, *The House of Mirth***

A beautiful but poor orphan who is hopelessly addicted to the pleasures of high society tries to find a wealthy husband but is foiled and eventually ruined.

### **Ernest Hemmingway, *The Sun Also Rises***

Brett Ashley breaks her engagement, flirts with every man she encounters, and has an affair with a bullfighter – but is she happy?

### **Zora Neale Hurston, *Their Eyes Were Watching God***

Janie Crawford has married three men and been tried for the murder of one of them, but she cares little for what her small-town neighbors think of her.



# Short Fiction: The Perfect Form

A *Reading the Arts Series*

As a genre of fiction, the short story is what has been called the perfect form. The short story does not have the luxury of words the novel enjoys, and so must build its foundations in a manner than can be almost poetic.

The writer of short fiction must possess all of the skills of the novelist and one more: the ability to edit oneself harshly, to say in ten words what the novelist can take 100 to say.

Sessions will include tips on how to write short fiction effectively using the stories explored in the series.

**Points of View: An Anthology of Short Stories**, James Moffett & Kenneth McElheny, editors

Who knows the truth?

The effect of narrative voice on the reader's understanding.

"My Side of the Matter" by Truman Capote

"The Five-Forty-Eight" by John Cheever

"The Minister's Black Veil" by Nathaniel Hawthorne

Could this happen here?

How writers manipulate their readers with setting.

"Fever Flower" by Shirley Ann Grau

"The Lottery" by Shirley Jackson

"Act of Faith" by Irwin Shaw

How do we grow up?

The initiation archetype in short form.

"My Sister's Marriage" by Cynthia Marshall Rich

"A & P" by John Updike

"The Stone Boy" by Gina Berriault

Who knows what goes on in a woman's mind?

Stories from the inside.

"But the One on the Right" by Dorothy Parker

"The Lady's Maid" by Katherine Mansfield

"María Concepción" by Katherine Anne Porter

What is the truth?

Themes in short fiction.

"Flowers for Algernon" by Daniel Keyes

"On Saturday Afternoon" by Alan Sillitoe

"The Use of Force" by William Carlos Williams



# The World Creates a Nation

America was built on the brains and brawn of many people from across the world. From the early Dutch settlers who brought us the seeds of the sophisticated and cosmopolitan Manhattan, to the English who gave us many of the concepts used to build our government, to the French who fought for us in the Revolutionary War, the international influences on our American way of life are far reaching and indelible. This series explores how various cultures, societies, ideas, and ideals came together to create "a more perfect Union."

*Dutch*

**Russell Shorto**, *The Island at the Center of the World: The Epic Story of Dutch Manhattan and the Forgotten Colony That Shaped America*

The Dutch colony pre-dated the "original" thirteen colonies, yet it seems strikingly familiar. Its capital was cosmopolitan and multi-ethnic, and its citizens valued free trade, individual rights, and religious freedom.

*French*

**Richard M. Ketchum**, *Victory at Yorktown: The Campaign That Won the Revolution*

Focusing on the latter half of the Revolutionary War, culminating in Cornwallis's surrender at Yorktown, Ketchum shows the importance of the year 1780 in turning the tide of the war.

*Africa*

**T. H. Breen and Stephen Innes**, *Myne Owne Ground: Race and Freedom on Virginia's Eastern Shore 1640-1676*

This history focuses on the changing social forces in Virginia that allowed black families to escape bondage but pushed their descendants into slavery.

**James A. Mitchner**, *Chesapeake*

Mitchner brings history to life, following Edmund Steed and his family, who parallel the settling and forming of the nation. CHESAPEAKE sweeps readers from the unspoiled world of the Native Americans to the voyages of Captain John Smith, the Revolutionary War, and right up to modern times.

**Catherine Drinker Bowen**, *Miracle of Philadelphia: The Story of the Constitutional Convention May to September 1787*

There are many misconceptions that exist in our society regarding what the Constitution is and isn't; what it was meant to create and protect and what it does not.

This series was developed with funds from the Delaware Humanities Forum, a state agency of the National Endowment for the Humanities.





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Delmarva Discussions offers scholar-led reading/discussion programs to libraries, museums, community centers, and other non-profit sites. Current and past grantors include the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Delaware Humanities Forum, the Maryland Humanities Council, The Community Foundation of the Eastern Shore, and the State of Delaware Division of Libraries.