



## *Greater Richmond AAUW Book Group*

*Meeting schedule, September 2014 — August 2015*

*Book Group normally meets on the third Thursday of each month at 7:30 p.m.*

For information, please contact

DeAnn Lineberry, [deann.lineberry@yahoo.com](mailto:deann.lineberry@yahoo.com) or phone 233-5352

September 18, 2014 — *Hispanic Heritage Month* Sept 15 – Oct 15

*My Beloved World*, Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor (2013, 336 pages).

[http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0307594882/ref=ox\\_sc\\_sfl\\_title\\_2?ie=UTF8&psc=1&smid=A1SMB86Y59A0OC](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0307594882/ref=ox_sc_sfl_title_2?ie=UTF8&psc=1&smid=A1SMB86Y59A0OC)

*Hostess: Gaynell Olsen*

*Discussion leader: Carol Stephens*

The first Hispanic and third woman appointed to the U.S. Supreme Court, Sonia Sotomayor has become an instant American icon. With a candor and intimacy never undertaken by a sitting Justice, she recounts her life from a Bronx housing project to the federal bench, a journey that offers an inspiring testament to her own extraordinary determination and the power of believing in oneself.

Here is the story of a precarious childhood, with an alcoholic father (who died when she was nine) and a devoted but overburdened mother, and of the refuge a little girl took from the turmoil at home with her passionately spirited paternal grandmother. But it was when she was diagnosed with juvenile diabetes that the precocious Sonia recognized she must ultimately depend on herself. She would learn to give herself the insulin shots she needed to survive and soon imagined a path to a different life. With only television characters for her professional role models – and little understanding of what was involved – she determined to become a lawyer, a dream that would sustain her on an unlikely course, from valedictorian of her high school class to the highest honors at Princeton, Yale Law School, the New York County District Attorney's office, private practice, and appointment to the Federal District Court before the age of 40.

Along the way we see how she was shaped by her invaluable mentors, a failed marriage, and the modern version of extended family she has created from cherished friends and their children. Through her still-astonished eyes, America's infinite possibilities are envisioned anew in this warm and honest book, destined to become a classic of self-invention and self-discovery.

October 16, 2014

*Lives of Girls and Women*, by Alice Munro (1973, 250 pages). *Canadian author, winner 2013 Nobel Prize for Literature*

[http://www.amazon.com/Lives-Girls-Women-Alice-Munro/dp/0070440433/ref=tmm\\_hrd\\_title\\_0?encoding=UTF8&sr=&qid=](http://www.amazon.com/Lives-Girls-Women-Alice-Munro/dp/0070440433/ref=tmm_hrd_title_0?encoding=UTF8&sr=&qid=)

*Hostess & Discussion leader: Suzanne Conrad*

The only novel from Alice Munro is an insightful, honest book, "autobiographical in form but not in fact," that chronicles a young girl's growing up in rural Ontario in the 1940's. Del Jordan lives out at the end of the Flats Road on her father's fox farm, where her most frequent companions are an eccentric bachelor family friend and her rough younger brother. When she begins spending more time in town, she is surrounded by women — her mother, an agnostic, opinionated woman who sells encyclopedias to local farmers; her mother's boarder, the lusty Fern Dogherty; and her best friend, Naomi, with whom she shares the frustrations and unbridled glee of adolescence. Through these unwitting mentors and in her own encounters with sex, birth, and death, Del explores the dark and bright sides of womanhood. All along she remains a wise, witty observer and recorder of truths in small-town life. The result is a powerful, moving, and humorous demonstration of Alice Munro's unparalleled awareness of the lives of girls and women.

About the author: Alice Munro grew up in Wingham, Ontario, and attended the University of Western Ontario. She has published numerous anthologies of short stories. During her distinguished career she has been the recipient of many awards and prizes, including the W.H. Smith Prize, the National Book Circle Critics Award, the PEN/Malamud Award for Excellence in Short Fiction, the Lannan Literary Award, the Commonwealth Writers' Prize, and the Rea Award for the Short Story. In Canada, she has won the Governor General's Award, the Giller Prize, the Trillium Book Award, and the Libris Award. Alice Munro and her husband divide their time between Clinton, Ontario, and Comox, British Columbia. In 2013, she was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature.

November 20, 2014

*Born Fighting: How the Scots-Irish Shaped America*, by James Webb (2004, 384 pages).

<http://www.amazon.com/Born-Fighting-Scots-Irish-Shaped-America/dp/0767916891>

*Hostess: Cheryl Kapeck*

*Discussion Leader: Virginia Turner*

More than 27 million Americans today can trace their lineage to the Scots, whose bloodline was stained by centuries of continuous warfare along the border between England and Scotland, and later in the bitter settlements of England's Ulster Plantation in Northern Ireland. Between 250,000 and 400,000 Scots-Irish migrated to America in the 18th century, traveling in groups of families and bringing with them not only long experience as rebels and outcasts but also unparalleled skills as frontiersmen and guerrilla fighters. Their cultural identity reflected acute individualism, dislike of aristocracy, and a military tradition. Over time, the Scots-Irish

defined the attitudes and values of the military, of working class America, and even of the peculiarly populist form of American democracy itself.

*Born Fighting* is the first book to chronicle the full journey of this remarkable cultural group, and the profound, but unrecognized, role it has played in the shaping of America. Written with the storytelling verve that has earned his works such acclaim as “captivating ... unforgettable” Scots-Irishman James Webb — Vietnam combat veteran and former Naval Secretary — traces the history of his people, beginning nearly 2,000 years ago at Hadrian’s Wall, when the nation of Scotland was formed north of the Wall through armed conflict in contrast to England’s formation to the south through commerce and trade. Webb recounts the Scots’ odyssey — their clashes with the English in Scotland and then in Ulster, their retreat from one war-ravaged land to another. Through engrossing chronicles of the challenges the Scots-Irish faced, Webb vividly portrays how they developed the qualities that helped settle the American frontier and define the American character.

*Born Fighting* shows that the Scots-Irish were 40 percent of the Revolutionary War army; they included the pioneers Daniel Boone, Lewis and Clark, Davy Crockett, and Sam Houston; they were the writers Edgar Allan Poe and Mark Twain; and they have given America numerous great military leaders, including Stonewall Jackson, Ulysses S. Grant, Audie Murphy, and George S. Patton, as well as most of the soldiers of the Confederacy (only 5 percent of whom owned slaves, and who fought against what they viewed as an invading army). It illustrates how the Scots-Irish redefined American politics, creating the populist movement and giving the country a dozen presidents, including Andrew Jackson, Teddy Roosevelt, Woodrow Wilson, Ronald Reagan, and Bill Clinton. And it explores how the Scots-Irish culture of isolation, hard luck, stubbornness, and mistrust of the nation’s elite formed and still dominates blue-collar America, the military services, the Bible Belt, and country music.

Both a distinguished work of cultural history and a human drama that speaks straight to the heart of contemporary America, *Born Fighting* reintroduces America to its most powerful, patriotic, and individualistic cultural group — one too often ignored or taken for granted.

#### December 18, 2014

*Book exchange & poetry sharing (no book discussion)*

*Hostess: Catherine Luckey*

For the second year, we’ll do something different in December – poetry sharing and book exchange. Those attending are invited to bring a poem or poems that you especially like and share why this is one of your favorites – perhaps because of the topic, the lyrical quality, the technique, or maybe the setting in which you first encountered the poetry. If you don’t have a favorite poem to share, don’t let that keep you from attending, as we are sure you will enjoy hearing other members’ selections and can contribute to the discussion.

*Also for this meeting:* Please bring a gently used book that you think another member in our group will enjoy; gift wrap it but do not include your name. Then we’ll play a gift-choosing and -swapping game till everyone has a new book. Other book groups have found this a fun way to expose us all to different authors and books. You might just find a new favorite author! *One restriction – please do NOT bring a book we have read in our Book Group.*

We did these two fun sharing things at our December, 2013, meeting and had lots of fun. So we’re looking forward to another fun Christmas party, with poetry & gift sharing time to enjoy. And ... no book to read, saving some holiday stress!

#### January 15, 2015 Snow date: January 22

*Virginia is for Mysteries Short Story Anthology*, by Sisters in Crime Mystery Writers Group (2013)

*Refreshments coordinator: Lesin Dippold*

*Meeting location: TBA*

*Discussion leader: Maggie King, author of one mystery story included in anthology*

*Virginia Is for Mysteries* is a collection of 16 short stories set in and around the state of Virginia. All stories are written by Virginia residents with murder in mind. Each is a member of the Sisters in Crime writers group. The idea of a themed anthology is popular in mystery writing groups, and *Virginia Is for Mysteries* can be compared to *Chesapeake Crimes*, *Fish Tales*, *Fish Nets*, or *Best New England Crime Stories*.

Our own GRAAUW member Maggie King is a member of Sisters in Crime and a contributor to the *Virginia is for Mysteries Collection*. Her first novel titled *Murder at the Book Group* (hmmmm ...) is scheduled for release late this year.

February 19, 2015 — Black History Month

*The Secrets of Mary Bowser*, by Lois Leveen (2012, 496 pages). Recommended by Carol Stephens.

[http://www.amazon.com/Secrets-Mary-Bowser-Lois-Leveen/dp/0062107909/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1405287470&sr=1-1&keywords=secrets+of+mary+bowser+by+lois+leveen](http://www.amazon.com/Secrets-Mary-Bowser-Lois-Leveen/dp/0062107909/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1405287470&sr=1-1&keywords=secrets+of+mary+bowser+by+lois+leveen)

Hostess: Carol Swartz

Discussion leader: DeAnn Lineberry

Based on the true story of Mary Bowser, a freed slave who returns to Virginia to spy on the Confederates, *The Secrets of Mary Bowser* is the powerful story of a woman who must sacrifice her freedom to truly achieve it.

"I spy with my little eye, where the bird goes when he doesn't fly," Mama said one mid-day, her words floating on the Richmond heat as we carried empty cookpots through the yard to the kitchen. Mama, your little girl is all grown up, and still playing our best game. I am a spy."

Mary Bowser was born a slave into the household of well-known spy Elizabeth Van Lew. As a child, Mary was freed from slavery and went to Philadelphia to be educated. Then as the American Civil War looms, Mary gives up her independence and returns to her home state. There she poses as an illiterate slave in the Confederate White House and spies on President Jefferson Davis. But as the death and destruction of war take their toll, Mary discovers that everything comes at a cost — even freedom.

Based on a true story, *The Secrets of Mary Bowser* is an extraordinary and inspiring tale of injustice and courage, friendship and conflict — and of one woman willing to sacrifice her own liberty to change the course of history.

About the author: Award-winning author Lois Leveen's work has appeared in the *New York Times*, on NPR, and in literary journals and anthologies. A former faculty member at UCLA and Reed College, she lives in Portland, Oregon.

March 19, 2015 — Women's History Month

*The Spy Mistress (a novel about Elizabeth Van Lew)* by Jennifer Chiaverini (2014, 384 pages). Recommended by Georgiana Ball.

[http://www.amazon.com/Spymistress-Novel-Jennifer-Chiaverini/dp/0142180882/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1408747046&sr=1-1&keywords=spy+mistress](http://www.amazon.com/Spymistress-Novel-Jennifer-Chiaverini/dp/0142180882/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1408747046&sr=1-1&keywords=spy+mistress)

Hostess: Mary Radziejewski

Discussion leader: Georgiana Ball

Born to slave-holding aristocracy in Richmond, Virginia, and educated by Northern Quakers, Elizabeth Van Lew was a paradox of her time. When her native state seceded in April 1861, Van Lew's convictions compelled her to defy the new Confederate regime. Pledging her loyalty to the Lincoln White House, her courage would never waver, even as her wartime actions threatened not only her reputation, but also her life. Van Lew's skills in gathering military intelligence were unparalleled. She helped to construct the Richmond Underground and orchestrated escapes from the infamous Confederate Libby Prison under the guise of humanitarian aid. Her spy ring's reach was vast, from clerks in the Confederate War and Navy Departments to the very home of Confederate President Jefferson Davis. Although Van Lew was inducted posthumously into the Military Intelligence Hall of Fame, the astonishing scope of her achievements has never been widely known. In Chiaverini's riveting tale of high-stakes espionage, a great heroine of the Civil War finally gets her due.

About the author: Jennifer Chiaverini lives with her husband and two sons in Madison, Wisconsin. She has written two novels about women in Mary Todd Lincoln's circle, *Mrs. Lincoln's Dressmaker* and *Mrs. Lincoln's Rival* about Kate Chase Sprague, daughter of Salmon Chase, a member of Abraham Lincoln's Cabinet. She has also published 16 volumes in the Elm Creek Quilts series and four books of quilt patterns inspired by these novels; she also designs the Elm Creek Quilts fabric line from Red Rooster Fabrics. For more information about Jennifer, please visit her website at [www.elmcreek.net](http://www.elmcreek.net).

April 16, 2015

Graphic Novels, chosen by individual members

Hostess: Virginia Turner

Discussion coordinator: Gina, with member presentations

*From 50 Essential Graphic Novels*, by Lily King for AbeBooks.com

While the term graphic novel only entered common usage as recently as the late 1970's, novel length works in either pictures-only forms or pictures in combination with text have existed since the 19th century. Baby boomers who haven't picked up a comic book since childhood will most likely associate the term with the *Classics Illustrated* series, which does not quite fit the modern definition. As defined today, a graphic novel is a book-length story told in comic strip format where the art is of equal or greater importance than text, and published as a single volume. Fiction, non-fiction, biography and memoir can all be considered graphic novels if published in book form and presented through the use of sequential image panels.

Considered by some to be the first modern graphic novel, *A Contract with God* by comics legend Will Eisner, first published in 1978, was actually just the first to use the term graphic novel as a marketing tactic (it appeared on the cover of the trade paperback edition). Eisner's book was actually preceded by *It Rhymes with Lust* by Drake Waller, a full-length, noir-inspired picture novel from 1950. A more direct *Contract* precursor appeared nine years later, in 1959, with Harvey Kurtzman's *Jungle Book*, a collection of

four graphic short stories from the creator of *Mad Magazine*. After Eisner's success, both comic book and mainstream publishers began to take long-form comics more seriously, releasing an increasing number of titles every year, of continuously higher quality, culminating with Volume I of Art Spiegelman's Pulitzer Prize-winning *Maus* in 1986, which threw open the door for every wonderful thing that has come since.

Even with critical and commercial success, in both the periods leading up to and since *Maus*, some writers/artists have bristled at the use of the term graphic novel. Most grew up reading comic books and started their careers wanting to write comic books, so they have no qualms about calling what they create exactly that – comic books. Others have tried to create their own terminology by adding subtitles to their work, such as Seth's *A Picture Novella*, Daniel Clowes' *A Comic-strip Novel*, and Alison Bechdel's *A Family Tragicomic*.

No matter what you call it, the genre isn't easily pigeon-holed into clear-cut categories, making compiling a list of 50 must-read graphic novels a daunting task. This is just the tip of the iceberg — in no particular order. Click here for AbeBooks.com editors' list of 50 Essential Graphic Novels: <http://www.abebooks.com/books/features/50-essential-graphic-novels.shtml>

*Virginia Turner's friend Hillary Anderson's suggestions:*

- *The Arrival*, by Shaun Tan, a completely wordless novel that explores the alienation and disorientation of the immigrant experience;
- *To Timbaktu: Nine Countries, Two People, One True Story*, by Casey Scieszka and Steven Weinberg;
- *Persepolis*, by Marjane Satrapi, the story of her childhood during the Islamic Revolution in Iran; and
- *Maus* by Art Spiegelman (1992 Pulitzer Prize), which depicts the author interviewing his father about his experiences as a Polish Jew and Holocaust survivor.
- Hillary also suggests that Book Group members simply go to the *Graphic Novels* section of our public libraries and select books to share with our group.

May 14, 2015

*Shine Shine Shine*, by Lydia Netzer, of Norfolk, Virginia (2012, 336 pages). *Suggested by Lesin Dippold & Carol Stephens. New York Times 2012 notable book.*

<http://www.barnesandnoble.com/w/shine-shine-shine-lydia-netzer/1107010274?ean=9781250020413>

*Hostess: Sandra Anderson*

*Discussion leader: Lesin Dippold*

When Maxon met Sunny, he was seven years, four months, and 18 days old. Or, he was 2693 rotations of the earth old. Maxon was different. Sunny was different. They were different together. Now, 20 years later, they are married, and Sunny wants, more than anything, to be "normal." She's got the housewife thing down perfectly, but Maxon, a genius engineer, is on a NASA mission to the moon, programming robots for a new colony. Once they were two outcasts who found unlikely love in each other: a wondrous, strange relationship formed from urgent desire for connection. But now they're parents to an autistic son. And Sunny is pregnant again. And her mother is dying in the hospital. Their marriage is on the brink of imploding, and they're at each other's throats with blame and fear. What exactly has gone wrong? Sunny wishes Maxon would turn the rocket around and come straight-the-hell home. When an accident in space puts the mission in peril, everything Sunny and Maxon have built hangs in the balance. Dark secrets, long-forgotten murders, and a blond wig all come tumbling to the light. And nothing will ever be the same....

A debut novel of singular power and intelligence, *Shine Shine Shine* is a unique love story, an adventure between worlds, and a stunning novel of love, death, and what it means to be human.

About the author: Lydia Netzer was born in Detroit and educated in the Midwest. She now lives in Norfolk, Virginia, with her two home-schooled children and math-making husband. When she isn't teaching, reading, or writing her next novel, she plays the guitar in a rock band.

June 18, 2015

*Orphan Train*, by Christina Baker Kline (2013, 278 pages). *Recommended by Kathy Kelley*

[http://www.amazon.com/Orphan-Train-Christina-Baker-Kline/dp/0061950726/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1408748738&sr=1-1&keywords=orphan+train+by+christina+baker+kline](http://www.amazon.com/Orphan-Train-Christina-Baker-Kline/dp/0061950726/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1408748738&sr=1-1&keywords=orphan+train+by+christina+baker+kline)

*Hostess: Kathy Kelley*

*Discussion leader: \_\_\_\_\_*

*Orphan Train* is a gripping story of friendship and second chances. Penobscot Indian Molly Ayer is close to "aging out" out of the foster care system. A community service position helping an elderly woman clean out her home is the only thing keeping Molly out of "juvie" and worse... As she helps Vivian sort through her possessions and memories, Molly learns that she and Vivian aren't as different as they seem to be. A young Irish immigrant orphaned in New York City, Vivian was put on a train to the Midwest with hundreds of other children whose destinies would be determined by luck and chance. Molly discovers that she has the power to help Vivian find answers to mysteries that have haunted her for her entire life — answers that will ultimately free them both. Rich in detail and epic in scope, *Orphan Train* is a powerful novel of upheaval and resilience, of unexpected friendship, and of the secrets we carry that keep us from finding out who we are.

From Booklist: A long journey from home and the struggle to find it again form the heart of the intertwined stories that make up this moving novel. Foster teen Molly is performing community-service work for elderly widow Vivian, and as they go through Vivian's cluttered attic, they discover that their lives have much in common. When Vivian was a girl, she was taken to a new life on an orphan train. These trains carried children to adoptive families for 75 years, from the mid-19th century to the start of the Great Depression. Novelist Kline brings Vivian's hardscrabble existence in Depression-era Minnesota to stunning life. Molly's present-day story in Maine seems to pale in comparison, but as we listen to the two characters talk, we find grace and power in both of these seemingly disparate lives. Although the girls are vulnerable, left to the whims of strangers, they show courage and resourcefulness. Kline illuminates a largely hidden chapter of American history, while portraying the coming-of-age of two resilient young women.

About the author: Christina Baker Kline was born in Cambridge, England, and raised there as well as in the American South and Maine. She is the author of five novels: *Orphan Train*, *Bird in Hand*, *The Way Life Should Be*, *Desire Lines*, and *Sweet Water*. She is co-editor, with Anne Burt, of *About Face: Women Write about What They See When They Look in the Mirror* and co-author, with Christina L. Baker, of *The Conversation Begins: Mothers and Daughters Talk about Living Feminism*. She has edited three other anthologies: *Child of Mine*, *Room to Grow*, and *Always Too Soon*. Writer-in-Residence at Fordham University from 2007 to 2011, Kline has also taught literature and creative writing at Yale, New York University, The University of Virginia, and Drew University. A graduate of Yale, Cambridge University, and the University of Virginia, where she was a Hoynes Fellow in Fiction Writing, Kline is a recipient of a Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation Fellowship and several research fellowships, and has been a Writer-in-Residence at the Virginia Center for the Creative Arts. Kline lives with husband and three sons in Montclair, New Jersey. She is at work on another novel and an anthology.

July 16, 2015

*The Swerve: How the World Became Modern*, by Stephen Greenblatt (2011, 368 pages). Winner, 2011 National Book Award for Non-Fiction; 2012 Pulitzer Prize for Non-Fiction. *Recommended by Sandra Anderson*.

[http://www.amazon.com/The-Swerve-World-Became-Modern/dp/0393064476/ref=tmm\\_hrd\\_title\\_0?ie=UTF8&qid=1395694299&sr=1-1](http://www.amazon.com/The-Swerve-World-Became-Modern/dp/0393064476/ref=tmm_hrd_title_0?ie=UTF8&qid=1395694299&sr=1-1)

Hostess \_\_\_\_\_

Discussion leader: Sandra Anderson

One of the world's most celebrated scholars, Stephen Greenblatt has crafted both an innovative work of history and a thrilling story of discovery, in which one manuscript, plucked from a thousand years of neglect, changed the course of human thought and made possible the world as we know it. Nearly 600 years ago, a short, genial, cannily alert man in his late 30s took a very old manuscript off a library shelf, saw with excitement what he had discovered, and ordered that it be copied. That book was the last surviving manuscript of an ancient Roman philosophical epic, *On the Nature of Things*, by Lucretius — a beautiful poem of the most dangerous ideas: that the universe functioned without the aid of gods, that religious fear was damaging to human life, and that matter was made up of very small particles in eternal motion, colliding and swerving in new directions.

The copying and translation of this ancient book — the greatest discovery of the greatest book-hunter of his age — fueled the Renaissance, inspiring artists such as Botticelli and thinkers such as Giordano Bruno; shaped the thought of Galileo and Freud, Darwin and Einstein; and had a revolutionary influence on writers such as Montaigne and Shakespeare and even Thomas Jefferson.

About the Author: Stephen Greenblatt is Cogan University Professor of the Humanities at Harvard University. Also General Editor of The Norton Shakespeare, he is the author of 11 books, has edited seven collections of criticism, and is a founding co-editor of the journal *Representations*. His many honors include the Distinguished Humanist Award from the Mellon Foundation, two Guggenheim Fellowships, and the Distinguished Teaching Award from the University of California, Berkeley. He was president of the Modern Language Association of America, and is a fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, the American Philosophical Society, and the American Academy of Arts and Letters.

August 20, 2015

Summer Social — Time to Party!

Suggested Places: Vinny's Italian Restaurant, Shops at Stratford Hills  
Off Forest Hill Avenue, just east of Chippenham Parkway

---

---

---

---