



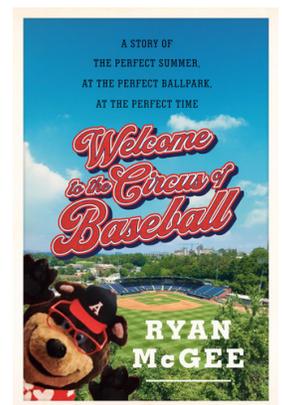
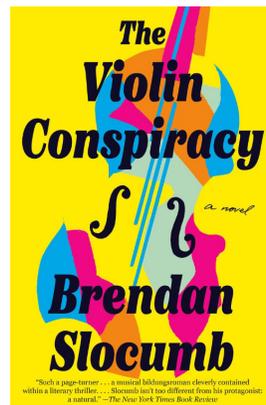
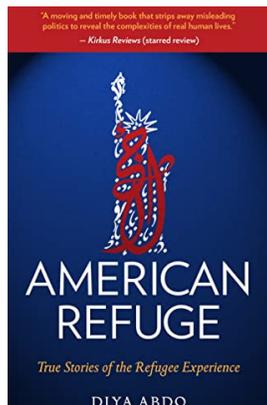
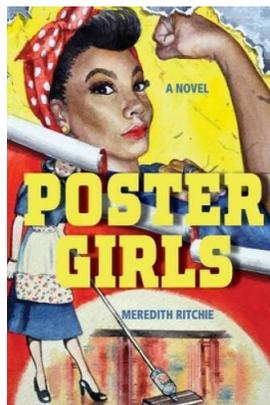
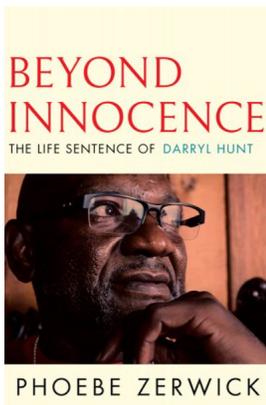
NORTH CAROLINA READS | READING SCHEDULE & DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

North Carolina Humanities' 2024 statewide book club, North Carolina Reads, features five books that explore issues of racial, social and gender equity and the history and culture of North Carolina.

North Carolina Humanities hopes these stories encourage engaging, productive conversation among participants. At the heart of North Carolina Reads is North Carolina Humanities' desire to connect communities through shared reading experiences.

As part of North Carolina Reads, North Carolina Humanities is hosting monthly book club events where participants will hear from guest speakers, including book authors and topic experts, and will have a chance to ask questions about the featured book.

Here, we offer a reading schedule and provide sample discussion questions to ask yourself and and talk about with others as you read. For ideas on how to plan a book club discussion event, please view our companion Program Guide.



FEBRUARY 2024

<p>BEYOND INNOCENCE THE LIFE SENTENCE OF DARRYL HUNT</p>  <p>PHOEBE ZERWICK</p>	<p><i>Beyond Innocence</i> <i>The Life Sentence of Darryl Hunt</i> BY PHOEBE ZERWICK</p> <hr/> <p>READING SCHEDULE</p> <p>February 1-8pages 1-70 February 9-15pages 71-139 February 16-22pages 140-217 February 23-29pages 218-279</p>
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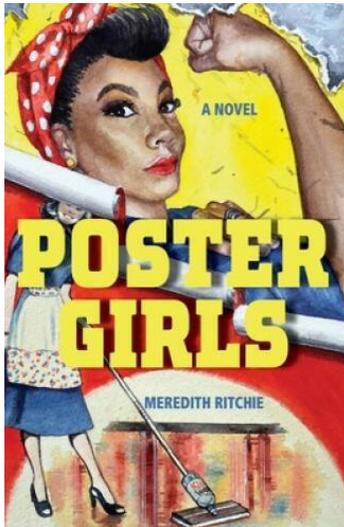
DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What were the circumstances that led to Darryl Hunt’s arrest in 1984 and what factors contributed to his conviction?
- What conditions did Darryl experience while incarcerated?
- What roles do the legacy of slavery, segregation, Jim Crow, and racism play in policies of mass incarceration?
- What are the reasons for the growth of prisons and populations of incarcerated individuals in North Carolina?
- How was Darryl Hunt eventually exonerated in 2003?
- What challenges do those who are wrongly convicted face after being released?
- What is the impact of wrongful convictions on individuals and communities?





MARCH 2024



Poster Girls

BY MEREDITH RITCHIE

READING SCHEDULE

March 1-8	pages 1-83
March 9-15	pages 84-166
March 16-22	pages 167-247
March 23-31	pages 248-336

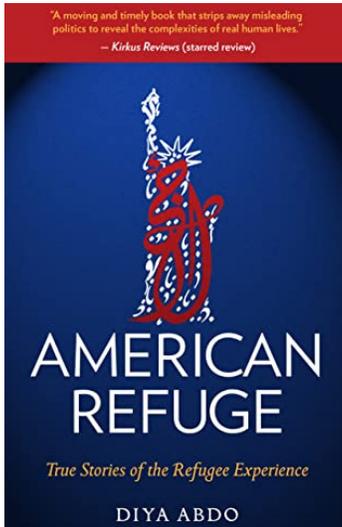
DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Both Kora and Maggie felt like “outsiders” at various points throughout the novel. How did their friendship, relationships, and work help them feel more connected to each other and their community?
- How did the activities of the women working at the Shell Assembly Plant, and others on the home front in the story, contribute to the war effort during World War II?
- What effect do you think the depiction of women as “Rosie the Riveter” had on women’s social and economic position and opportunities in the novel?
- The characters experience instances of racism and sexism in the book. How did those experiences affect characters like Kora, Maggie, Lieutenant Owens, and others?
- What did Kora and Maggie learn from each other?
- Throughout the novel, Maggie struggled with Charlie’s decision to leave her and the twin girls in order to serve in the military. How do Maggie’s feelings about Charlie’s decision change from the beginning of the novel to the end?
- At the end of the novel, Billie notes that, “It’s an adjustment for everyone,” when talking about their lives since the war ended. How do you think women were changed by their World War II experiences?





APRIL 2024



American Refuge: True Stories of the Refugee Experience

BY DIYA ABDO

READING SCHEDULE

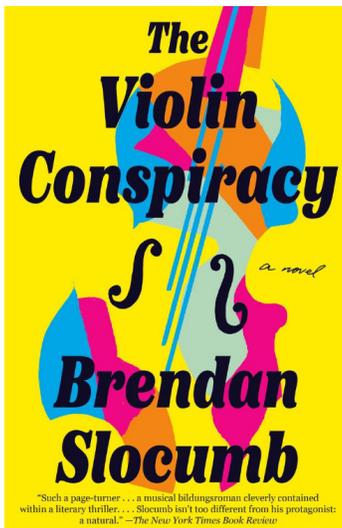
April 1-7	pages 1-34
April 8-14	pages 35-79
April 15-21.....	pages 80-123
April 22-30.....	pages 124-144

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What do you think the author means when she notes in Chapter 2, that “Human bodies on the move don’t always take their souls with them?”
- Why do people migrate and move? What do the stories in Chapter 3 show about why people leave their home country?
- The author notes in Chapter 4 that, “Less than 1% of the world’s refugees are ever resettled.” What do the stories show about life in refugee camps?
- What are some challenges that migrants and refugees face when moving to another country?
- What are some challenges that migrants and refugees face once they have settled in a new country?
- What moral and legal questions does the refugee crisis raise about our responsibilities to each other as human beings?
- Why is it important to share and understand the immigration stories of ourselves and others? How might these stories shape the ways in which we live and relate to one another?



MAY 2024



The Violin Conspiracy

BY BRENDAN SLOCUMB

READING SCHEDULE

May 1-8	pages 1-86
May 9-16	pages 87-169
May 17-24	pages 170-253
May 25-31	pages 254-333

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- The novel begins with the theft of Ray McMillan's priceless Stradivarius violin. What were your initial thoughts about the disappearance of the violin?
- Ray experiences instances of prejudice, discrimination, and racism in his everyday life throughout the novel. How did those experiences affect Ray, and what does it say about diversity in the world of classical music?
- The novel explores the complicated dynamics between Ray and his family, especially after they learn that the old family "fiddle" is actually a priceless Stradivarius. What are your impressions about Ray's relationships with different family members (Grandma Nora, Aunt Rochelle, Ray's mother, Ray's other aunts and uncles, etc.)?
- Ray's mentor in the novel is Dr. Janice Stevens. Explain the importance of Janice's role as a mentor and friend in helping Ray on his journey to become a professional concert violinist.
- Why do you think the Marks family feels that the violin belongs to them?
- Ray learns more about his family history and ancestor Leon, including Leon's musical talents. What does Leon's story show readers about family legacies?
- Ray qualifies for the Tchaikovsky Competition, which is a prestigious competition and opportunity for Ray to showcase his talents at the international level. How does Ray's participation in this competition shape him as a musician?



JUNE 2024



Welcome to the Circus of Baseball

BY RYAN MCGEE

READING SCHEDULE

June 1-7	pages 1-54
June 8-14	pages 55-116
June 15-21	pages 117-184
June 22-30	pages 185-251

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Have you ever attended a Minor League Baseball (MiLB) game? What was your experience?
 - The author details all the jobs required to host a season of Asheville Tourists' baseball games. Was there anything surprising about how much work was necessary to operate a MiLB team in the 1990s?
 - The author details a series of mishaps and missteps made by the interns during their summer working with the Asheville Tourists. What did you find particularly funny or relatable about the author's experiences at his first job? Do you think first jobs allow us to share similar experiences?
 - Asheville has had a professional baseball team since 1897, and McCormick Field will celebrate its 100th year in 2024.
- Throughout the book, the author notes that many historical figures visited the field, and that the field has been central to historical events in Asheville. What do you think is the cultural, historical, and economic importance of MiLB in communities across North Carolina?
- The author notes that people of every age attended baseball games. Why do you think baseball has generational appeal?
 - What were some of the challenges for MiLB teams in the 1990s? What are some of the challenges for MiLB teams today?



NORTH CAROLINA READS

Reading Schedule & Discussion Questions

Please note that selected books are intended for readers 18 and over and may not be suitable for some audiences.

Any views, findings, conclusions, opinions, or recommendations expressed by our partners and participants do not necessarily represent those of North Carolina Humanities or the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Through public humanities programs and grantmaking, North Carolina Humanities connects North Carolinians with cultural experiences that spur dialogue, deepen human connections, and inspire community. North Carolina Humanities is a statewide nonprofit and affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities.

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