

Reading Matters

GREAT BOOKS COUNCIL OF SAN FRANCISCO
Serving Northern California

Right! -- or Wrong!

CIA intervention stirs discussion

By Rick White with Donna Reynolds

The Brothers, a historical account of the careers of John Foster Dulles and his brother Allen, by Steven Kinzer, told of their interference in the affairs of developing countries, such “black ops” at times bloody and always unacknowledged. They saw this action as necessary to stop the spread of Soviet communism.

Skulduggery was not the only subject of Kinzer’s historical account of these famous two, one of them President Dwight Eisenhower’s secretary of state and the other his director of the recently formed Central Intelligence Agency. But it was the surprise. The Movietone News of our youth had not shown us the underside, the “dirty tricks.”

Thoughtful consideration was given in our groups to how and why this happened and under what circumstances it might be justified—that is, of course, when it worked. Often it failed, not because the communists won (sometimes) but because of the mess it left, sometimes for many years—“unanticipated consequences,” one person remarked.

How the brothers got themselves into this huggemugger was presented in fascinating detail. In doing so, they often overlooked critical factors having little or nothing to do with communism,

It was sunny and beautiful at the historic Pioneer United Methodist Church in Auburn where 29 souls

gathered in two groups to discuss the Kinzer book. Attendees were from the Bay and Sacramento areas, southern California, and Nevada. Several were new to the Gold Country mini-retreat and some to Great Books. Interest in getting on the GBSF mailing list was expressed.

While two hours for discussion are customary in these events, two and a half were allotted for this book. One group was led by Brian Mahoney and the other by a Jim Hall – Rick White team. Most participants were able to remember the period. A few knew the affected countries from personal experience.

In both groups there was a willingness to suspend judgment until controversies had been discussed thor-

oughly. However, one participant had personal knowledge of life under Communist rule and wanted it known that it was grim, hard to understand for those who have lived their life in the USA.

The Great Books custom is not to achieve consensus. In this instance it might have been agreement on the

morality or the practicality of the brothers’ approach. The intent is not to win an argument but to learn by listening to one another’s views.

The discussion was held in the morning. After a delicious catered lunch on site, the movie, *The Quiet American*, based on the book by Graham Greene, was viewed. It involved the CIA, but the period leading to the Vietnam War. Similar issues arose.

The Auburn “Gold Country Mini-Retreat” is the only GBSF event focusing on non-fiction, and it is more challenging to discuss, partly because the book is mostly factual, or at least presented as such, rather than



imaginative, so it is less about interpretation than is discussing fiction or poetry. This book worked in part because of the ethical issues it raised, in part because of its revelations. Perhaps history, and biography, work better than other forms of non-fiction in application of the Great Books “method of shared inquiry.”

While one participant was unhappy about out-of-context references during the discussion, the overall evaluations of the book, the lunch, and the movie were all positive.

Asilomar 2023 Report

By Mark Scardina

In these times of tumultuous change, it’s remarkable that we have been putting on this weekend in the same uniquely beautiful location for sixty years. Long-time readers may remember Jim Baird’s Asilomar Diary in these pages. My recount is written in that spirit.

For many of the weekend's great bookies, the event did not begin on Friday evening. Their annual trek started hours earlier as the limited routes to the Monterey Coast were clogged with SF Bay Area commuters. Whether coming from Santa Rosa, Sacramento, Fresno, or Southern California, everyone met with a trying highway reception.

Even so, all arrived in time for dinner. Leaders arrived earlier for a get-together in appreciation. In earlier years this was a stealth BYOB event, but now it is above board. Joining me were **Rick & Kay White, Ellen Ward, Elena Schmid, Dorothy McHale, Sheri Kindsvater, Parki Hoeschler, Jim Hall, and Louise DiMattio**. Besides added hours of reading in advance of an event, leaders meet in a pre-discussion to explore and evaluate potential questions. Unfortunately, the key person hosting these sessions and compiling their results for the leaders to draw from at the event, **Louise Morgan**, was not available to attend and enjoy the fruit of her work. However, the pre-discussions themselves are a special pleasure.

The Poetry

Pablo Neruda’s aptly named poem, “Poetry,” started the weekend's sessions. This work expresses Neruda’s poetic awakening, how it became a part of his life. Rich in metaphor, the group explored its myriad meanings, culminating in these final lines:

*I wheeled with the stars,
my heart broke free on the open sky.*

Going back centuries, John Donne’s “Holy Sonnet IX” questioned the entire foundation of religion in a concise 14-line sonnet. Using man’s innate gift of reason, he argues against the concepts of original sin and eternal damnation leaving the group to decipher his purpose – either to regain the immortality lost in the Garden of Eden or to achieve mercy from God’s wrath.

Rich but opaque imagery of potential death were up next in “The Black Swan” by Randall Jarrell as we returned to the 20th century. The swan metaphor permeated the poem in multiple stanzas challenging confident interpretation. From the first line:

When the swans turned my sister into a swan

to the last couplet:

*But the swan my sister called, "Sleep at last,
little sister,"
And stroked all night, with a black wing, my
wings*

it was as beautiful as it was beguiling, some surmising it expressed the loss of a sibling.

We finished the evening with a work by a poet who recently participated in our Poetry Weekend. Rebecca Foust’s “Dark Card” brought the evening into current times, and the need to combat the fear of being different. While ostensibly about an autistic son and his mother’s felt need to “go into my tap dance-and-shuffle routine,” to cover for his odd public behavior, the group quickly expanded the poem’s scope. This intensely personal if necessarily humorous ode left the group ruminating over the last couplet:

*how he sees the moonlit vole
on the freeway’s blurred berm.*



Barbara McConnell Spring Conference at Asilomar

The Essays

Saturday morning's discussion proved eye-opening as Ayn Rand was up not for her "infamous" literary novels but for two essays. While both were written in the early sixties, "How Does One Lead a Rational Life in An Irrational Society" proved to be foundational for the second essay. Even though most of the group had lived through those tumultuous times, it proved critical to use the definitions of the day for understanding and appreciating their current relevance.

Her admonition against moral agnosticism and support for the moral principle of "Judge, and be prepared to be judged." was initially hard to reconcile until her argument was fully laid out and understood. This was no better exemplified than by her statement: "Moral values are the motive power of man's actions." and that "a society made up of men paralyzed by the loss of moral standards, principles and goals" is either going

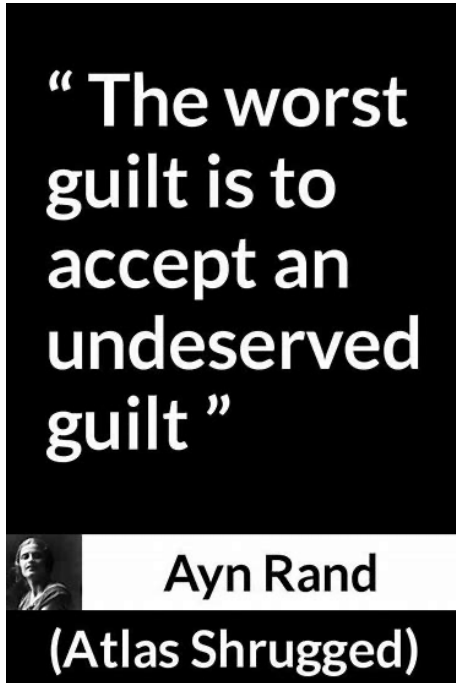
to be directed by "the man who is willing to assume the responsibility of asserting rational values—or from the thug who is not troubled by questions of responsibility."

This lively but weighty discussion led us right into the second essay, "Racism." With today's continuous "factionalization" of groups, seeing racism as "the most crudely primitive form of collectivism" and that "a man is to be judged, not by his own character and actions, but by the characters and actions of a collective of ancestors" had heads nodding. The difficulty came in understanding how she claims the antidote to racism is in "the philosophy of individualism and its politico-economic corollary, laissez-faire capitalism."

In the end, many understood her concern for the consequences of the civil rights bill passage on property rights and continued racism which was even

acknowledged by the N.Y. Times in its expression of the final question:

But the question must be not whether a group recognizable in color, features or culture has its rights as a group. No, the question is whether any American individual, regardless of color, features or culture, is deprived of his rights as an American.



The Meet and Greet

Started last year, this late-afternoon hosted social was again a big hit. This year we had several first-time attendees, **Marina Rose, Suzanne Kirk, Carla Caruso, and Cleve Schneider**, who were welcomed by all. It was an opportunity to renew old acquaintances and meet with those coming from great distances and other states such as Nevada and Utah. One could definitely hear the impact of the previous two sessions on the animated conversations.

The Novel

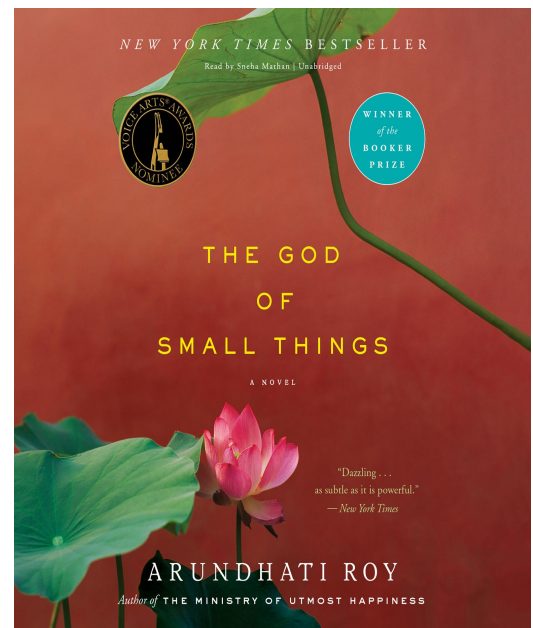
This year's selection proved controversial in its length and content. Arundhati Roy's debut novel, *The God of Small Things*, was a challenge in length with its interwoven timelines and an extensive cast of

characters. This morality tale of a Christian family's struggles both internally and externally in the village of Ayemenem in India is as shocking as it is intensely intimate. While simplified by the author for western audiences, the caste system's mores and consequences clashed with Christian values in lines such as:

And there it was again. Another religion turned against itself. Another edifice constructed by the human mind, decimated by human nature

proved to lead to an intense discussion.

Many had a hard time stepping back to analyze the arc of the tale. One particular interpretation that had Velutha, a persecuted and beaten to-death young man, as a Jesus figure proved revealing.



The Play

It's not often that a play is both comical and serious. Gotthold Ephraim Lessing's *Nathan the Wise* is definitely both and proved to be a fitting wrap-up for the weekend. This 18th-century drama, set in the time of the Crusades, proved to be as deep as it was humorous with a few plot twists thrown in. Its depth was

illustrated when the Jewish merchant, Nathan, counseled Conrade the Templar:

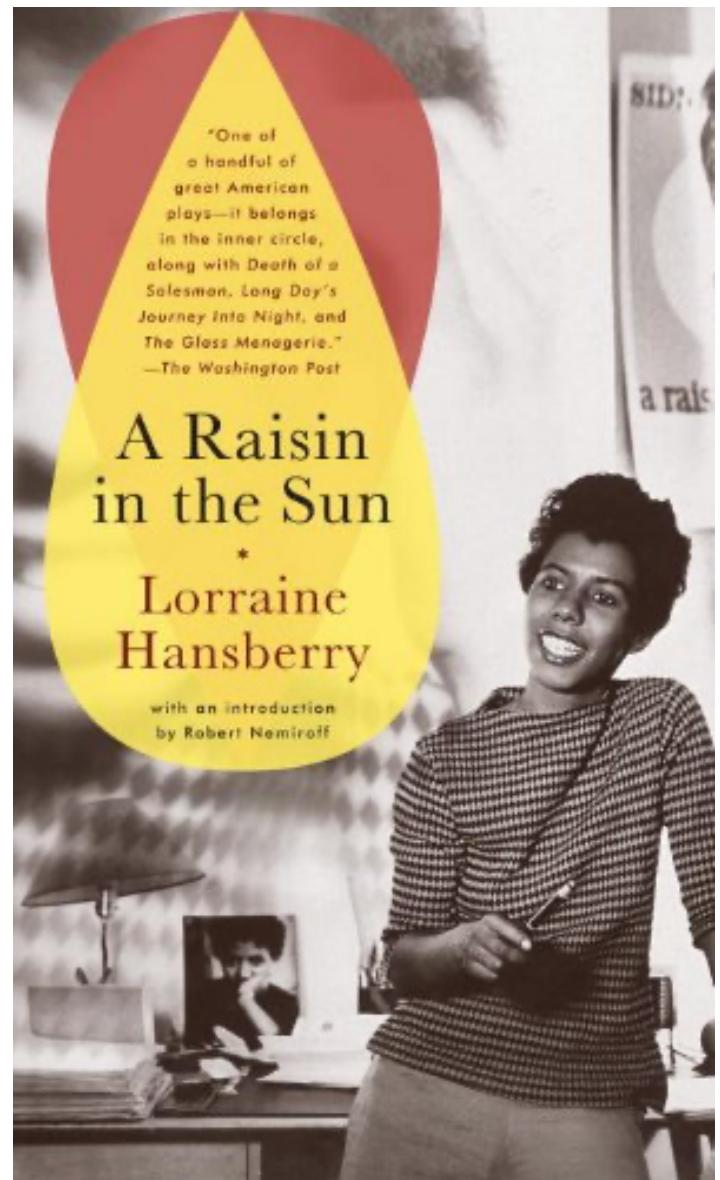
*We must, we will be friends. Despise my nation—
We did not choose a nation for ourselves. Are we
our nations? What's a nation then? Were jews
and Christians such, e'er they were men? And
have I found in thee one more, to whom It is
enough to be a man.*

The group found fertile ground for inquiring into the differences in religion, family, culture and station. This melting pot resolved in an ending that had the group interpreting such differences as mere facades no more innate than one's wardrobe.

The "Theme"

It's been a running joke that there is always a hidden theme behind the selections for the weekend. Groups spent time at the end considering whether such was the case this year. As responsible for the selections, I was of course interrogated. My response was only that the inspiration for these selections came from a work that we did not discuss – John Locke's *A Letter Concerning Toleration*.

One final note by way of a huge THANK YOU to Sheri Kindsvater who has been this event's registrar for over a decade and will be taking a hiatus as a GBSF volunteer. She has been essential in making this event successful and lasting. We hope to see her as a participant next year. Speaking of which, please reserve April 12th to 14th for our 2024 event! Please send suggestions for candidate readings to me at greatbook-sncal.bmaweekend@gmail.com.



"Raisin" to be featured at GBSF annual confab

By Rick White

"A Raisin in the Sun," by Lorraine Hansberry, is guaranteed to excite its discussion at this year's GBSF annual meeting, on Zoom, which begins at 10 a.m. on July 8.

Its discussion follows election of officers for the year and brief annual reports on operations and finance.

According to Hansberry, her play was inspired by this poem:

“HARLEM”

-- Langston Hughes

What happened to a dream deferred?

Does it dry up
like a raisin in the sun?
Or fester like a sore—
And then run?

Does it stink like rotten meat?
Or rust and sugar over--
like a sugary sweet?
Maybe it just sags
like a heavy load.

Or does it explode?

Officers nominated by the council’s executive committee are Louise DiMattio, president; Elena Schmid, vice president; Caroline Van Howe, secretary, and the team of Paul D. Smith and his wife Eileen Coleman as treasurer. Owing to the recent pandemic, Louise DiMattio has agreed to continue for a year added to our customary two. Our treasurer team will assume the responsibility carried by Brian Mahoney. Brian is retiring after two decades at this but will stay on as a member of the executive committee. As usual, further nominations submitted either before or at the meeting will be eligible for election. The event is open to anyone who has attended a GBSF event or discussion during the past year. To register, go to <https://www.greatbook-sncal.org/annual-meeting>. Please join us in 2024!



Paul and Eileen

Poetry Weekend 2023: Can Poetry Save Our World?

By Paula Weinberger

November 11-12, 2023 via Zoom

More and more, poets are showing their concern for our troubled environment, not by preaching or condemning, but by speaking from the heart. We are pleased to have Elizabeth Herron, poet laureate of Sonoma County, as our guest poet. Elizabeth, an eco-poet and activist, has been a consistent speaker of truth about the toll climate change has had on the creatures and habitats we love. She calls herself a poet of witness, for while a poem may be in response to a particular beauty or suffering in the outer world, its voice emerges out of inner quiet. Elizabeth combines a unique process of narration and poetry to weave together the genesis of each poem.

This year’s Poetry Weekend offers a rich selection of poems for discussion.

Saturday 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon PST

OPENINGS

The Light Changed by Yves Bonnefoy

Aubade by Louise Glück

Acorn by Phillis Levin

Daedal by A.E Stallings

The Course of a Particular by Wallace Stevens

Saturday 2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. PST

CLOSINGS

The Lamplighter by Eavan Boland

Another Story by Ellen Bass

Jacaranda by Aracelis Girmay

How Music Stays in the Body by Lee Herrick

Singularity by Marie Howe

On Sunday from 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon PST, Elizabeth Herron will lead an interactive seminar exploring how poetry can become a voice for the natural world. In the afternoon, from 2:00 – 4:00 p.m. PST, she will read a selection of her poetry.

To register, go to the Great Books Council of San Francisco website: <https://www.greatbook-sncal.org/>. From the Events menu, select Poetry Weekend. **Tuition \$50**



About Elizabeth Herron

Author of four previous books of poetry: *Insistent Grace* (from Fernwood Press) and most recently *In the Cities of Sleep* (also from Fernwood); *The Poet's House*; *Desire Being Full of Distances*; and five chapbooks, Elizabeth C. Herron also writes articles about the importance of natural systems in the well-being of all life. Her work has appeared in *Reflections*, *North American Review*, *West Marin Review*, *Free State Review*, *Comstock Review* and *Parabola*, and is included in *Face to Face: Women Writing on Faith, Mysticism and Awakening*; *Fire and Rain*, *Ecopoetry of California*; and *What Kind of Ancestor Do You Want to Be*. The Mesa Refuge for Writers, the National Endowment for the Arts, and the Foundation for Deep Ecology have supported her work. She is a Fellow of the International League of Conservation Writers and lives with her husband in Northern California where she is the Poet Laureate of Sonoma County (2022 to 2024).

GREAT LEADING *REVEALED!*

People skills for introverts

By Louise Morgan

When preparing to lead a discussion, especially if you're new to leading, there is a natural tendency to focus exclusively on preparing a list of provocative and insightful questions -- questions that begin with "why" and "how", questions that you hope will stimulate a productive discussion, and the all-important Opening Question that will "unzip" the text in such a way that everyone in the group will be eager to offer an interpretation. That's all well and good.

But you will heighten your chances for success if you employ some subtle but basic psychological principles that may not come naturally to those of us who are introverts.

1. Project an air of confidence as you enter the room. Make eye contact, greet people as they arrive, sit tall and choose a seat that is visible to all.

-Why does this matter? Well, for one thing, this helps others to relax. People in a group tend to feel more comfortable when they know that there is someone "in charge". Additionally, this often results in the group tacitly granting you a degree of authority that could come in handy if you need to intervene later in the discussion, say to discourage inappropriate outside references, or to re-focus a discussion that is going off the rails.

2. Demonstrate concern for everyone's comfort. Before opening the discussion determine that all can *see* adequately (adjust lighting if necessary), can *hear* clearly (propose a hand signal for those who can't), and are *comfortable* with the temperature of the room.

-Why does this matter? It's common courtesy, but it also enhances the notion that you're someone who wants everyone to feel good and to feel included in the group.



3. Provide individual attention. Make eye contact when addressing specific people. Call each person by name (use nametags if necessary). Make a chart to indicate each time someone speaks. Read body language to determine if a quiet person wants to say something.

-Why does this matter? It causes people to feel “seen” and respected, and therefore happier to be in the group.

4. Be positive. Show enthusiasm for the reading and for the discussion.

-Why does this matter? It assures participants that they aren’t wasting their time and makes them feel happy to be in the group.

Now, obviously, some of these suggestions will need to be modified if you’re leading on Zoom where you can’t, for instance, control things like lighting levels or temperature. Zoom presents its own challenges in that leaders often are so focused on their questions they forget to look at the camera, thereby offering the group a sustained exposure to the tops of their down-turned heads! But you’d be surprised at how often these principles *do* apply, and how much more effective your carefully crafted questions will be if a little psychology is used.

Group photos in this issue
are by Paul D. Smith.

On the road again – with Louise DiMattio

Rossmoor, Walnut Creek, California

I must admit it. I have fallen in love with the lovely senior living community called Rossmoor in Walnut Creek. There are 1,800 picturesque acres of housing, gardens, golf courses and swimming pools to explore and enjoy. Most importantly, of course, is that Rossmoor hosts three very active Great Books discussion groups, each with its own separate flavor, interests and leaders. I have had the distinct pleasure of meeting with each of these groups and I am so impressed by the camaraderie and warmth that I find in all the groups. I am struck by the backgrounds of the participants, too. Among them are lawyers, poets, teachers, and administrators. Most have traveled throughout the world and have had a life-long love of reading.

I have become aware, too, of the long history of a Great Books presence at Rossmoor. Our own Barbara McConnell and her husband, Bob, lived the last years

of their lives there as did Ted Kraus whose wife Joanna survives him and still attends Great Books meetings at Rossmoor. The life of the late John Marsyla, a long time and greatly admired leader, was celebrated by many Great Bookies this year in February. These people, and many others, established a tradition that new leaders such as Joe Ficarelli and Paul Giurlanda strive to emulate and, I must say, they are doing a great job. Not to be overlooked are the contributions of the coordinators of the groups. Louise Dibble and Kathy Evans follow up with members and encourage participation. I am learning that word-of-mouth at the dog parks inside of Rossmoor is a powerful recruitment tool and location. Who knew?



Brent Browning at 2011 GBSF Picnic

New developments in the planning stages at Rossmoor include special discussion events focusing on classic novels using the Shared Inquiry discussion method. The very first event will begin in October, 2023, and will be an in-person, read-as-you-go discussion, spanning eight weeks, of Dickens's *Great Expectations*. This will be a joint effort by myself and the current leaders at Rossmoor. Readers, stay tuned!

Are reading groups now meeting in person?

For many years the local Council has conducted a census of all the Great Books reading groups in Northern California for publication in the January edition of *Reading Matters*. The census timing was not optimal because of the difficulty of reaching group contacts during the holiday season at the end of the year. This year we decided to do the census before the annual meeting in May.

A total of 31 groups responded to the census this year. Some of these groups are still on hold, most are meeting on Zoom, and a few have returned to meeting in person. Many groups have responded positively to the Zoom meetings and don't intend to return to in person meetings, but several groups are eager to meet personally again.

In 1998, our Council had 56 groups in Northern California. We now have approximately 30 groups, so we encourage you to consider starting a new group. If you decide to found a new group, let us know. Listing your group on the local website (<http://www.greatbook-sncal.org/>) is an excellent way to attract new members.

Jan Vargo, Database Manager May 6, 2023

Great Books Council of San Francisco Roster of Groups

May 2023

Central Valley	Group Contact			Readings
Auburn: Placer County Library 350 Nevada St. 2nd Tues, 1 PM	Donna Reynolds Walter L. Wilson	(916) 797-8561 (530) 878-6640	pianogaldonna@gmail.com bonwally@hotmail.com	GBF: Imperfect Ideal
Davis & Woodland: homes 3rd Wed or Thurs, 1:30 PM	Pat Dearborn	(530) 758-0108	dearborn@cal.net	GBF: Great Convers. 3
Fair Oaks: Zoom 2nd Wed, 7:30 PM (usually)	Catherine Vigran Sheri Kindsvater	(916) 761-7349	tvigran@comcast.net kindsvater@aol.com	Cisneros: The House on Mango Street
Sacramento: Renaissance Soc. Sac. State U., Gp Thursdays. 2 PM Zoom	Jean Cawood	(916) 396-8431	jczcawood@comcast.net	GBF: Civ. Eng. Reader, Imm. Voices, Counterparts, etc.
Sacramento: Renaissance Soc. Sac. State U. 1st Tuesday, 2-4 PM	Steven DeBry Louise DiMattio	(415) 244-2461	sdebry@yahoo.com ladimat@aol.com	Contact for information
Walnut Grove: Sacramento Delta homes 2nd & 4th Tues, 10 AM Zoom	Yvonne Pylman	(916) 744-1354	HomeRanch@aol.com	GBF: Seven Deadly Sins
East Bay/Tri-Valley	Group Contact			Readings
Zoom 3rd Friday, 1:30 PM	Rosalie Gonzales	(510) 525-3029	rosgonza@gmail.com	Various
Alameda: Main Library 1550 Oak St. 2nd Tues, 6:30 PM In person	Jeff Hitchings Susan Foreman	(240) 893-0325 (510) 914-1228	jeffhitchings.jh@gmail.com scotty2124@comcast.net	GBF: Gt. Convers. 2, Various
Berkeley Poetry Group home 1st Thurs, 7 PM Zoom	Nina Gibson Roger Smith	(510) 919-5058 (510) 558-0208	ngibson11@comcast.net rgrsm@aol.com	Poetry
Oakland, East Bay 2nd Thurs, 7 PM Zoom	Jan Vargo	(510) 849-1824	vargopack@cs.com	GBF: Citizens of the World, Her Own Accord, Nature of Life
Pleasanton (Tri-Valley): Towne Center Books 4th Mon, 7:30 PM Zoom	Brian Mahoney Peter MacDonald	(510) 301-1945 (925) 462-4430	gbbrianmahoney@gmail.com pmacdonald@macdonaldlaw.net	GBF: Standing Down, Various
Walnut Creek: homes in area 2nd Mon, 8 PM Zoom	Ronald Kihara		rkihara@comcast.net	Comics, graphic novels
Walnut Creek: Rossmoor 4th Mon, 10 AM, not Dec. In person	Louise DiMattio Kathy Evans	(415) 244-2461	ladimat@aol.com kathy.rainh2o@gmail.com	Art of the Short Story Daniel Halpern, ed.
Walnut Creek: Rossmoor Multipurpose Rm 1 4th Mon, 7 PM Zoom	Paul Giurlanda Barbara Shapiro	(702) 812-5765	vallejo1@icloud.com hefhiro2@gmail.com	GBF: Civ. Eng. Reader
Walnut Creek: Rossmoor Creekside Bldg. 4th Fri., 1:30 PM In person/Zoom	Joe Ficarelli Louise Dibble	(925) 210-1840 (925) 954-7461	ficarelli@hotmail.com louised323@yahoo.com	GBF Gt. Convers. 5

Marin	Group Contact			Readings
Kentfield: College of Marin 4th Tues, 1:30 PM Zoom	Norman Nayfach Julio Burroughs	(415) 499-3173 (415) 272-0168	normansn@hotmail.com julioburroughs@gmail.com	Various
Tiburon: Belvedere-Tiburon Library Founders' Rm. 2nd Tues, 2 PM, not Aug.	Alyce Sporer Mars Kay Lowney	(415) 889-5158 (415) 889-5590	asporer@yahoo.com kaylowney@comcast.net	Contact for information
San Francisco	Group Contact			Readings
San Francisco: Anza Branch Library 3rd Sun., 1:30 PM In person	Clifford Louie	(415) 750-1786	clifford.louie@sbcglobal.net	Various. Contact for info.
San Francisco: Older Women's League (OWL) 2nd Tues., 10 AM Zoom	Louise DiMattio Joan Downey	(415) 244-2461 (415) 317-2074	ladimat@aol.com jdowney324@outlook.com	GBF: Her Own Accord
San Francisco: The Sequoias 2nd Tues, 3 PM Zoom	Dennis Brydon Louise DiMattio	(415) 796-3809 (415) 244-2461	mbrydon1@aol.com ladimat@aol.com	GBF: Gt. Convers. 3
San Francisco: Virtual Great Books Group 3rd Tues, 6:00 PM Zoom	Albert Eng	(415) 641-9149	alberteng333@gmail.com	The Art of the Short Story
San Francisco: West Portal Branch Library Last Wed, 6:30 PM, not Dec. Zoom	Louise DiMattio Seymour Packman	(415) 244-2461 (415) 335-5181	ladimat@aol.com seymour.packman@ucsf.edu	GBF: Short Story Omnibus
San Francisco: 2nd Wed, 6:30 PM Zoom	Elena Schmid	(415) 550-9065	eschmid@sonic.net	GBF: Gt. Convers. 5
STEM reading group 1st Thurs, 5:30 PM Zoom	Brian Cunningham	(415) 567-1457	briancnngnam@gmail.com	GBF: Keeping Things Whole Readings in Environ. Sc.
South Bay, Santa Cruz	Group Contact			Readings
Los Altos: Public Library, San Antonio Rd. 3rd Tues, 7 PM Zoom	Norman Roth	(650) 823-1444	nmroth@gmail.com	GBF: Gt. Convers. 1, Imperfect Ideal
Los Gatos: Unitarian Fellowship 2nd Mon, 7:30 PM Zoom	Harry Campbell	(669) 246-8063	harrycampbell@gmail.com	Various essays, Current books
Monterey Peninsula College Great Books Certif. Prog. http://www.mpc.edu/greatbooks Zoom	Jamie Gerard		https://catalog.mpc.edu/	Contact for information
Monterey Peninsula College Great Books Club http://www.mpc.edu/greatbooks Zoom	Joshua Converse	(831) 917-6721	joshua.converse@gmail.com	Contact for information
Santa Cruz (OLLI) 1st Wed, Noon Zoom	Susan Gorsky Judy McNeely	(831) 234-4590 (831) 600-6382	sgorsky@sbcglobal.net judybookdoc @collegepathfinders.com	GBF: Gt. Convers. 1, Seven Deadly Sins

For more information on an individual group, call or email the group contact. Most groups welcome new members. Some groups have a waiting list or are part of a membership organization. Some groups are on hold during the pandemic. To make corrections or additions, contact Jan Vargo (510) 849-1824 or vargopack@cs.com.

Great Books Council of San Francisco (www.greatbookncal.org)
Great Books Foundation, Chicago (www.greatbooks.org)

GBSF 2023 calendar

January - February	March - April	May - June
<p>2/11 San Francisco Mini-Retreat: via Zoom.</p> <p>Novel: <i>Age of Iron</i> by J.M. Coetzee; Poems: “Country of Grief and Grace” by Antjie Krog; “His Day is Done” by Maya Angelou</p>	<p>4/28 – 4/30</p> <p>Barbara McConnell Spring Conference at Asilomar.</p> <p>Selected Poetry; <i>The God of Small Things</i> by Arundhati Roy; Essays by Ayn Rand; <i>Nathan the Wise</i> by Gotthold Lessing</p>	<p>5/20 Gold Country Mini-Retreat in Auburn.</p> <p><i>The Brothers</i> by Stephen Kinzer</p>
July - August	September - October	November - December
<p>7/8 Annual Meeting: via Zoom.</p> <p>Election of Officers. Discuss <i>A Raisin in the Sun</i> by Lorraine Hansberry</p> <p>7/15 Leader-Reader Workshop: via Zoom.</p>	<p>10/7 – 10/8</p> <p>Long Novel Weekend: via Zoom.</p> <p><i>Wuthering Heights</i> by Emily Brontë</p>	<p>Poetry Weekend: 11/11 – 11/12 via Zoom.</p> <p>Poetry: Guest Speaker, Elizabeth Herron</p>

SAN FRANCISCO GREAT BOOKS COUNCIL Serving Northern California: President, Louise DiMattio, Vice President, Elena Schmid; Secretary, Caroline Van Howe; Treasurer, Brian Mahoney; Past President, Brian Cunningham.

Reading Matters: Editor and Publisher, Rick White; E-letter Editor and Publisher, Jim Hall; Database, Jan Vargo.

Website: www.greatbooksncal.org **Great Books Foundation:** www.greatbooks.org

The GBSF annual financial report one-page summary can be seen on our website. The full report can be obtained from Brian Mahoney, Treasurer, at gbrianmahoney@gmail.com.