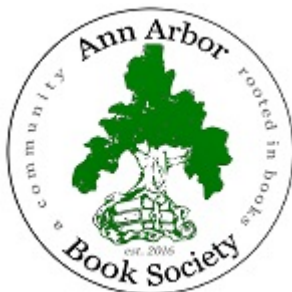


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April 2021 Newsletter

April Book Event Highlights

All events are virtual

Tuesday, April 6th at 4 pm: [Sports and the City: A Century in Detroit](#), UM Eisenberg Institute for Historical Studies

Tuesday, April 6th at 7 pm: [Book Launch for *Pride and Premeditation* with Tirzah Price](#), Nicola's Books

Thursday, April 1st & April 8th from 2 pm to 5 pm: [Highbrow Punk, Simple & Not As Simple Bindings for Zines, Chapbooks, or Whatever](#), UM Library

Thursday, April 8th at 7 pm: [At Home with Literati: Jenny Lawson in Conversation with Neil Gaiman](#), Literati Bookstore

Thursday, April 15th at 5 pm: [Zell Visiting Writers Series: Reading and Q & A with Kiese Laymon](#), UM LSA

Sunday, April 18th at 2 pm: [Write On! 3rd-5th Grade Writing Contest Awards](#), Ann Arbor District Library

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	28	29	30	31	1	2
	AAELI Scapline with Eli on AOLI TV	AAELI Scapline with Toby on AOLI TV	AAELI Scapline with Elizabeth on AOLI TV	Ulli Scapline Book & Screen AOLI TV	AAELI Scapline with Elizabeth on AOLI TV	Ull Center for South Asian Studies Reception Conference
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Ann Arbor Book Trivia

This former bookstore was named for a fictional character's magical device.

1. Wooden Spoon
2. Shaman Drum
3. Kaleidoscope
4. The Eye of Agamotto

Find the answer at the bottom of the newsletter!

Circle Books: Ann Arbor's First Metaphysical Bookstore

by Karen Alvarez

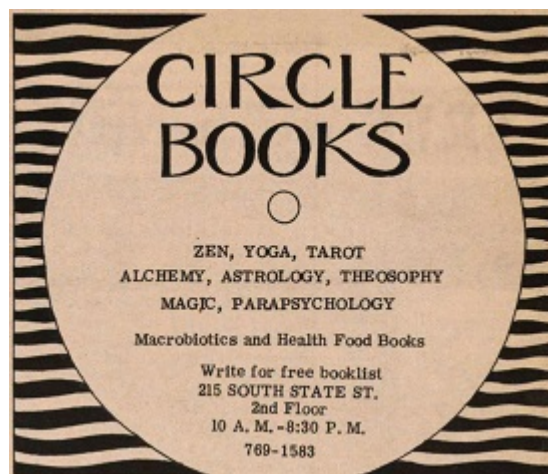
Excitement was brewing in late 1973 about the approach of Comet Kohoutek toward the sun.

They are wanderers who have chosen to go fast and far, who have hurried from our center until they reached incredible distances and became lost in black space. They are specks of dust lost in a frozen wasteland; it is only as they begin to come home that they gain any significance.

So proclaimed a flyer published by Circle Books, Ann Arbor's first "complete occult bookstore."

The comet turned out to be somewhat of a disappointment when it appeared dimmer than had been expected. Still, the timing of its appearance (coinciding

Ann Arbor resident Stephen Erlewine, frustrated at the lack of metaphysics books in local bookstores, opened Circle Books in 1968. His brother and fellow astrology enthusiast Michael drew astrological charts for customers and ran discussion groups. Their inventory included books on Zen, yoga, tarot, alchemy, theosophy, magic, parapsychology, macrobiotics, and health food. They also published astrological calendars and *The Circle Book of Charts*, a compilation of astrological data of famous people. The *AFA/Circle Books Astrological Calendar* was published annually and distributed nationwide for over 40 years, until 2011.



The store occupied a suite of rooms on the second floor of 215 South State Street and fit in well with the other tenants. Most of the shops in the building carried products associated with late-1960s popular culture; Little Things, Middle Earth, and Satyrn sold items like incense, lava lamps, caftans, and beaded curtains.

Circle Books contributed in other ways to Ann Arbor's progressive movements. The Erlewines taught classes on occultism as part of the "free university": The Substance of Astrology and The Concept of Age and the Degrees of Experience. The store co-sponsored a three-part, 12-hour radio documentary called The Story of The Beatles, and co-sponsored democratic socialist candidate Perry Bullard's participation in a walkathon as part of his bid for the state house of representatives.

While Circle Books grew its reputation and clientele over the next few years, other bookstores began to add metaphysical genres to their shelves. By 1975 the store was no longer sustainable and much of the inventory was sold. Michael Erlewine and his wife Margaret continued to offer classes, books, and horoscopes for a brief time under the name Meridian Books. Eventually, the Erlewines relocated to Big Rapids, MI and founded an astrology-focused computer software company. In 1991, Michael created All Music Guide, now

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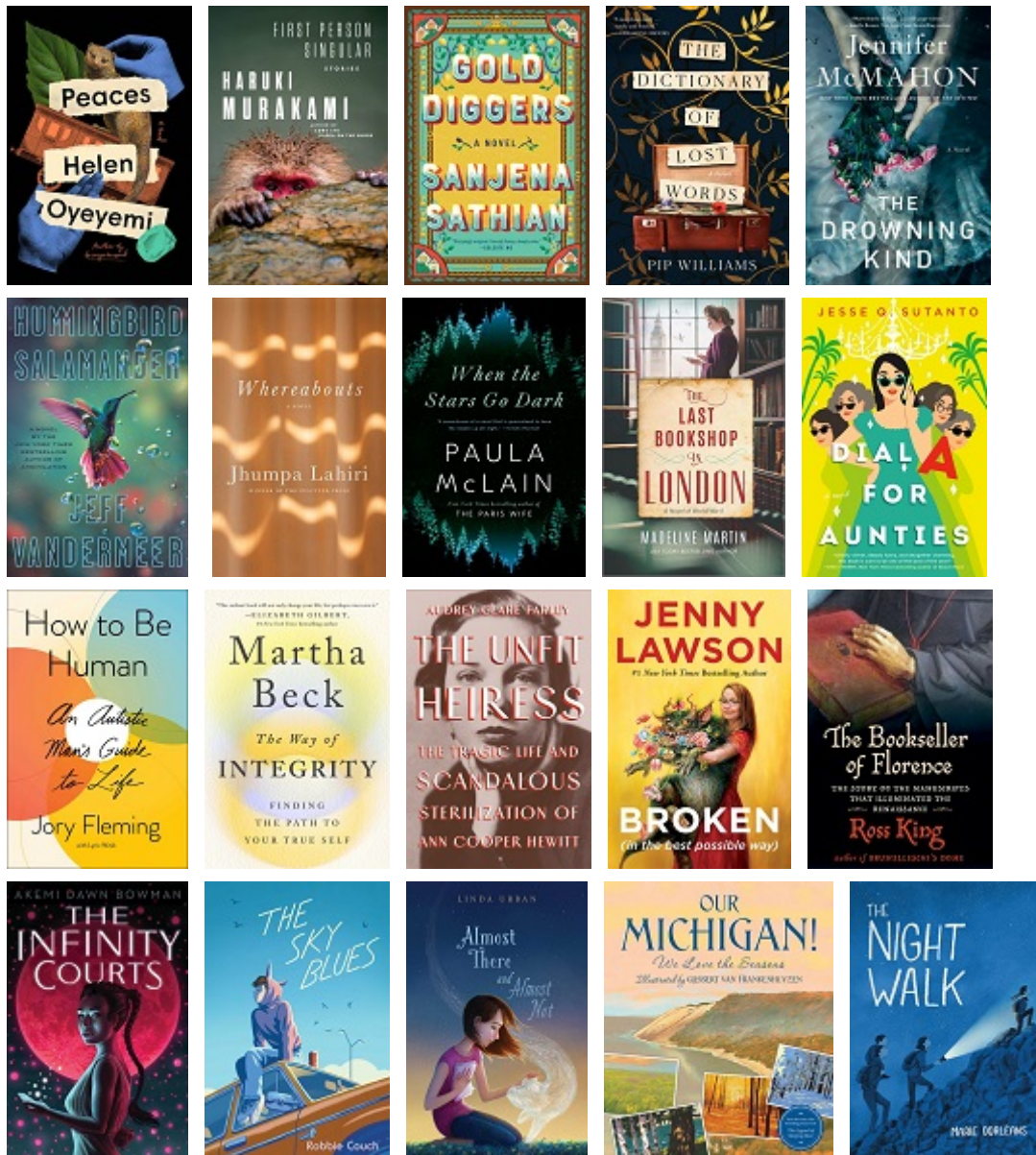
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known folk artist.

Noteworthy New Releases



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Book Ends



The University of Michigan's Institute for the Humanities is celebrating National Poetry Month with [Poetry Blast](#), a campaign to encourage everyone in the community to either read a poem, write a poem, or listen to a poem in the month of April. Check it out!

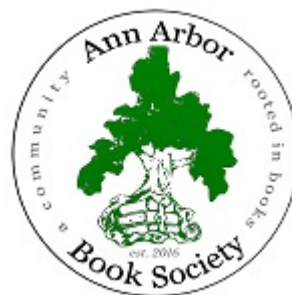


The Ann Arbor District Library recently introduced [Dial-a-Story](#), a new service that allows you to call in to listen to short stories and poems read by library staff! Stories for adults, teens, and children in English and Spanish are available, and new stories are added every Monday.

Hemingway's Michigan

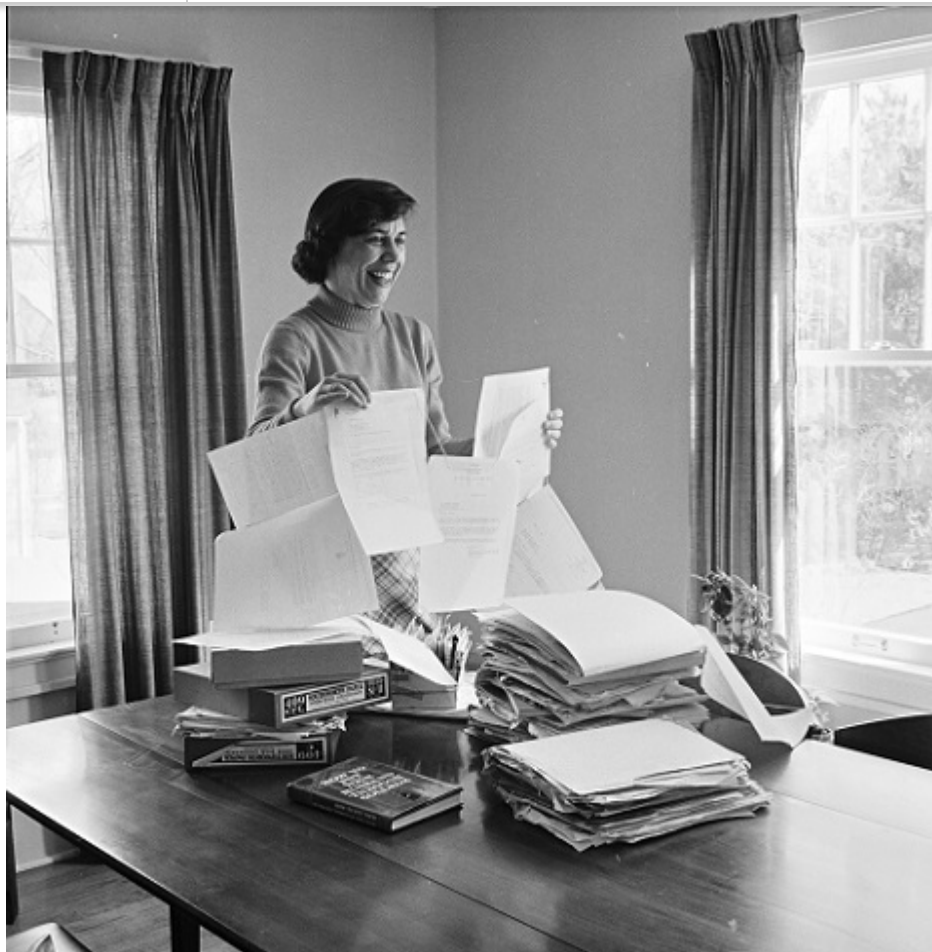
On Wednesday, April 5th, PBS will air the three-part, six-hour documentary [Hemingway](#) by Ken Burns and Lynn Novick, which offers insights to [Ernest Hemingway's Michigan roots](#).

The Village of Walloon Lake, home of one-time summer resident Ernest Hemingway, is also celebrating his life with a year-long celebration, [Hemingway Homecoming](#), which commences April 1st with the program Walloon Lake Reads: *The Nick Adams Stories*, that runs through mid-May.



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Caption: Barbara Debrodt with materials for her book, "How to Put Your Husband Through College," April, 1970, from the Ann Arbor News. Courtesy of the AADL.

Ann Arbor Book Trivia Answer

The Eye of Agamotto was a magical talisman worn around the neck by Marvel Comics character Doctor Strange, and was Ann Arbor's premier comic book shop from 1975 until it closed in 1986. Located at 340 S. State St., and owned and operated solely by Norm Harris, "The Eye" as it was called, introduced Ann Arbor to underground comics. Although closed for 35 years, you can follow The Eye of Agamotto on [Facebook!](#)

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