



Ann Arbor Independent Booksellers Association

A community rooted in books

January Newsletter

January Book Event Highlights

Thursday, January 14th at 7 pm: Colson Whitehead, author of *The Underground Railroad*, at the Mendelssohn Theater, 911 N. University. Books provided by Literati Bookstore.

Monday, January 16th at 4 pm: Poet Claudia Rankine, author of *Citizen: An American Lyric*, at Rackham Auditorium, 915 E. Washington St. Books provided by Bookbound Bookstore.

Tuesday, January 17th at 7 pm: Nick Petrie, author of *Burning Bright*, at Nicola's Books, 2513 Jackson Ave.

For more information on these and other great book-related events happening in January, please visit our all-inclusive events calendar [here](#).

The Book That Changed My Life

In 1964, while a graduate student at Florida State University, I bought a copy of *A Geography of Subsaharan Africa*, by Harm J. de Blij. This was not a required course

book. My interest in Africa had been kindled in a two-year period when my family lived in Morocco. The de Blij book applied a thematic approach to individual countries. This design opened many doors to understanding and researching the African continent. After reading it, Africa became the focus of my professional development. African Studies was prominent at Michigan State University which was the academic home of Dr. Harm J. de Blij.

In the fall of 1965, I left for East Lansing. I made contact with Dr. de Blij and began a long and productive academic relationship with him. He recruited me to travel to Kenya in the spring of 1966 to carry out preliminary research for him. Later in 1968-1969, I was one of three doctoral students who went to Kenya to initiate Ph.D. research there under de Blij's sponsorship. It is accurate to say that my whole life changed as a result of reading de Blij's *A Geography of Subsaharan Africa*. My research, travel, and teaching experiences, as well as an abiding respect for Harm de Blij--the teacher, writer, and most importantly, good friend--all came from reading this book.

---Andrew A. Nazzaro

Snapshot of the Past

***Books Half Off When
Clothes Are All Off***
WEDNESDAY MAR 20 1974

The Centicore Book Store on Maynard Street had some great buys Tuesday, but there was a catch. Only naked shoppers could take advantage of them. Owner Jim Rudolph called it a streak sale. About 50 persons did some buying, picking up books at half price. "Selling books was part of it," Rudolph said, "but we also wanted to provide a place to streak at room temperature." The one-hour sale attracted 35 male strikers, 15 female strikers and 300 applauding spectators. One man wore a stocking cap over his face, a beret on his head, a plastic machine gun in his arms and the words "Libidinese Liberation Army" written on his chest. Rudolph said he also hired a photographer to take pictures of the strikers as they browsed. "Just a sort of souvenir," said Rudolph, who remained dressed for the occasion.

Centicore Bookstore ad that appeared in The Ann Arbor News, March 20, 1974

Courtesy of AADL's Old News website

Community Book Clubs

The Ann Arbor/Ypsilanti area is filled with people who belong to book clubs. Book clubs run the gamut from neighborhood groups who get together once a month for dinner, wine, and hopefully a discussion of the book, to the more serious clubs that bring in professionals and set up panels to enhance the book being discussed. There are library book clubs, teen book clubs, bookstore book clubs – you name it – it's here.

Regardless of what kind of book club you belong to, they all offer the same benefits: they expose us to books we would never read, make us think about what we did and did not like about the book, and allow us to learn what others think. As Nathan Heller says in Slate magazine, "Book clubs are one effort to set up community in the landscape. They are our bid to stay on the same page across the blur of modern life."

One longtime bookstore book club is Aunt Agatha's mystery book club, which has been meeting for 23 years. In their January newsletter, co-owner Robin Agnew writes, "Through the years our discussions have gotten more focused, though the discussions are always very passionate, one way or the other! All of us, I think, have read books we otherwise wouldn't have and through discussion have come to enjoy books we may have initially disliked."

As one of their members states "...I appreciate the exposure to hundreds (after 23 years, "hundreds" is accurate) of authors and stories I never would have considered on my own."

If you love mysteries check out this delightful group. "We have had some members who have been with us from the beginning," Robin says, "but we always love meeting new people." Their next meeting is Thursday, January 26th at 7:00 pm. Author Carrie Smith will be there to talk about her second novel, *Forgotten City*.

On the Shelf

Did you know?

Every Tuesday through Thursday
from 11:30 am to 1:30 pm is *Book*

Happy Hour at Motte & Bailey Booksellers. During that time any single book in the shop is 15% off!

This is in addition to owner Gene Alloway's generous everyday offer

Buy Three get a Deal: "To help make room and to say thanks for coming in, when you visit our shop and buy 3 books, the cheapest of the three is free if it is \$12 or less. If all the books are priced over \$12, you still get \$10 off. And it works for 6 books, for 9 books, etc."

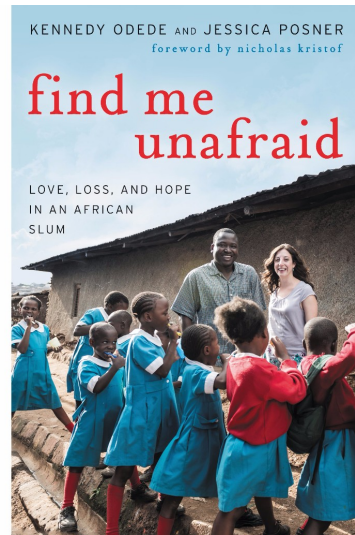
Just two more reasons to stop into this beautiful shop on Fourth Ave.!

Thank you!

Thank you to all our readers who took a few minutes to answer our survey in the December newsletter. Your input is very valuable to us and will inform future content in our monthly newsletters and on our website.

In the meantime, for bookstore profiles and monthly event information, please visit our website

a2books.org



Find Me Unafraid: Love, Loss, and Hope in an African Slum

Kennedy Odede, Jessica Posner

Ecco, \$15.99

Part adventure, part love, and all true. This is not only a story about the growing romantic love between the unlikely pairing of a Kenyan man and Jewish American woman, but the fierce love a person can have for his community and make it work against all odds. There are many times when you ask yourself, "How can Kennedy survive this?" And it is Kennedy telling you his story. The chapters alternate between Jessica and Kennedy along dual timelines, and they overlap in subtle ways before finally uniting. A beautiful story carefully woven together and bound by love, guaranteed to warm your heart.

--*Crysta Coburn,*
Book Inventory Manager at
Crazy Wisdom Bookstore



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