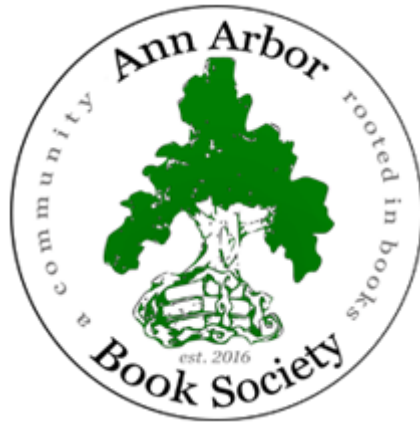


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a2books.org

November Newsletter

November Book Event Highlights

Thursday, November 1st at 7 pm: [Book Launch for ...And Pharoah Hardened His Heart: Poems for the Trump Years with Simon Mermelstein](#), Bookbound Bookstore, 1729 Plymouth Rd.

Thursday, November 8th from 7 pm to 8:30 pm: [Susan Orlean, author of The Library Book](#), at the Downtown Branch of AADL, 343 S. Fifth Ave.

Saturday, November 10th at 3 pm: [Joann Castle, author of What My Left Hand was Doing: Lessons from a Grassroots Activist](#), in conversation with [Alena Williams](#) at Nicola's Books, 2513 Jackson Ave.

Thursday, November 15th at 5:30 pm: [Zell Visiting Writers Series Reading and Signing with Aimee Bender and Philip Metres](#), University of Michigan Museum of Art Helmut Stern Auditorium, 525 S. State St.

Sunday, November 18th at 7 pm: [Literati Bookstore Presents Jonathan Franzen](#) at Zingerman's Greyline, 100 N. Ashley.

Wednesday, November 21st from 6 pm to 9 pm: [Carolyn Nowak signing](#) at Vault of Midnight, 219 S. Main St.

Wednesday, November 28th from 6:30 pm to 8:45 pm: [Xylem Magazine's Night of Poetry](#) at Crazy Wisdom Bookstore, 114 S. Main St.

November is full of book events! Be sure to check out our [calendar](#) for more great events at [a2books.org](#)!

Event Photo Highlight



Anne Lamott, author of *Almost Everything: Notes on Hope* at the First United Methodist Church of Ann Arbor, Thursday, October 25th. Sponsored by Literati Bookstore. (Photo courtesy of Monica-Amit Misra)

Bookstore Road Trip!



Schuler Books, Okemos

The outside of Schuler Books in Okemos, Michigan is deceiving. When you pull up to a large mall in the middle of a tree-lined neighborhood, you wonder if you're in the right place. Surely a locally-owned, long-loved bookstore would be the center of a quaint downtown area, right? Well, no one told Schuler, and they don't mind one bit.

Walking into the bookstore is the exact opposite of walking into a mall. There is stained wood everywhere, and books on every available surface. The environment is quiet, calm, and inviting. Had you wandered in from the crowds and cacophony of the busy mall, you'd think you had entered a little slice of quiet paradise. Even being there for a large author event, as my fiance and I were, the bookstore wasn't rushed, and no one hurried you along or forced you to line up.

The first Schuler Books opened up in 1982 in Grand Rapids, with Bill and Cecile Fehsenfeld at the forefront. Their love of books and giving back to the community translated well into a brick and mortar store, and they blossomed by selling books and newspapers and even had an espresso cart offering their new patrons coffee while they browsed. That cart would later become the Chapbook Cafe that remains in both current locations of the store. Their vision grew, and they expanded, eventually becoming Schuler Books and Music. They even have a print-on-demand service for self-publishers and people who love out-of-print titles: the Espresso Book Machine! There you can get professional-quality books right when you want them, whether its a title you haven't seen on shelves in years or your own work. Schuler was one of the first independent bookstores in the US to have one, and its still going strong!

Schuler has had its ups and downs, opening and subsequently closing several stores throughout Southern Michigan, but they are doing fine with one location in Grand Rapids, one in East Lansing, and through their ownership of Nicola's Books in Ann Arbor. Visiting the one in East Lansing/Okemos, you get the feeling that this is still a store very much owned and operated by one couple. Schuler has all the charm of a small town bookstore, and you quickly forget that you parked a mile away in a mall parking lot. The store was busier than normal, what with author Jim Butcher giving a

talk that day, but it never felt crowded or cramped. The staff was very kind, and even when they had to wrangle a bunch of us book fans, they were courteous and happy to assist. I knew that under a different circumstance, I could walk up to anyone and have a chat about books for a good while.

I have yet to visit Schuler Books' other location in Grand Rapids, but after such a pleasant experience in Okemos, I can't wait to venture to the other location and see just how lovely that one is as well. If you find yourself in East Lansing looking for some good reads, head on over to the Meridian Mall, and say hi to the employees and books at Schuler!

--Kimberly Gray

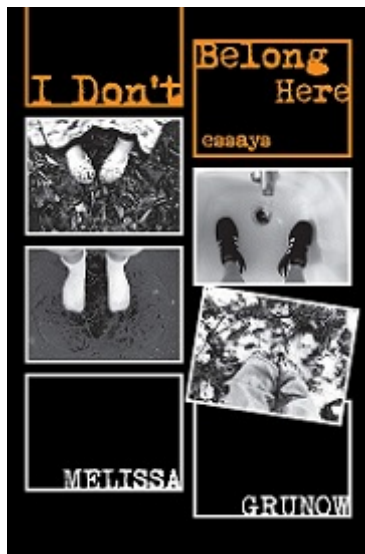
The Schuler Books Okemos location is located at 1982 Grand River Ave., Okemos, MI 48864. For more information on Schuler Books, visit their website at schulerbooks.com.



Book Ends

On the Shelf

Little Free Library



I Don't Belong Here
 By Melissa Grunow
 New Meridian Arts,
 Paperback, \$24
 July 12th, 2018

In our modern times, it's more important than ever that we turn our eyes and ears to the women living among us—women who have been maligned and sidestepped for centuries and are now fighting back, struggling to demolish the hoary old patriarchy once and for all, and shine a light on what it's like to live as a woman in 2018 and beyond. This is exactly why Melissa Grunow's new collection of essays, *I Don't Belong Here*, is such an essential book for this divisive era—the curtain has been drawn aside.

Grunow's collection certainly isn't for the faint of heart; there's plenty of grit, sorrow, and a hefty dose of fierce determination—all aspects of being a female in modern America. *I Don't Belong Here* doesn't focus much on the present times, but rather explores the



Kathleen Wright's
 Little Free Library
 532 Fifth Ave.
 Recipient of the Little Free Library
 Library of Distinction Award

Rachel Pastiva: How did you find out about Little Free Libraries?

Kathleen Wright: I think I found an article about LFL or somebody mentioned them, so I went to the LFL site and fell in love. At that time there was only one other on Ann Arbor's official LFL map. I put my hubs, Jonathan, right on it :) It took longer than we thought, by the time we figured out design, chose materials and layout of the area, and actually built it so that it was very sturdy and waterproof. It works super well with no leaks. The next thing we want to do is put in solar lights. I purchased some and hopefully, they'll be in before the snow flies.

Rachel: What inspired the inclusion of an owl in your LFL's design?

Kathleen: The summer we put the LFL in I was walking every day, very early in the morning—before dawn. We had a family of screech owls

author's past relationships and experiences in an effort to gain a better understanding of just who she is today, and how she and many like her got here. Her keen sense of self-determination is an awe-inspiring salve for many of the psychological burns women suffer to this day. It is her intensely confessional tone—her willingness to let it all lay bare, scars and all—that give this collection of personal essays a veritable punch to the amygdala.

From paranoia suffered abroad in faraway countries around strange men to the lamentations of a failed marriage and relationships that led to heartache and pain, Grunow has given her readers a confident, yet unassuming set of confessionals that serve to help us understand the plight of many women. Though she has lived in many places across the country, her mind often returns to her childhood in Michigan: during overwhelming hot summers in New Mexico or elsewhere. The Mitten State has clearly shaped much of Grunow's psychological landscape, as well as her memories.

Above all, these essays, though dark and often filled with grief, are a testament to female resilience. Grunow is a gifted, thoughtful writer with an unfiltered tone that serves her readers what we desperately need: empathic understanding.

--Michael A. Ferro's debut novel, [TITLE 13](#), was published by Harvard

living in the neighborhood and they were always in our yard, front or back. I fell in love with these little ear-tufted guys with their funny, whirring trill. One morning the whole family was up in our front tree and I took a photo... which in the early morning light came out as a blurry, group of six blobs on the branches with glowing eyes! Jonathan decided to surprise me and put an owl on the LFL. We brought our family fairy theme in by having the owl clutch a copy of my book... which in actuality is still a manuscript. :P

Rachel: I love that you've created a space to gather with benches for adults and kids. Do borrowers often make use of the space?

Kathleen: Borrowers do sometimes sit and have a good meander over the books in the warmer weather. Oftentimes it is parents with little kids. LOVE it.

Rachel: In what ways do you think your LFL has impacted your neighborhood?

Kathleen: The neighbors are very fond of our LFL. We have all come to know neighbors further afield through it. We had a neighbor across the street, she passed away last year, but she would especially love to cross the street and chat with anyone who stopped by.

Rachel: What has been the most surprising part of being an LFL steward?

Kathleen: I have been happily surprised by the number of people I have met. And just how much fun it

Square Editions in 2018. He was named as a finalist by Glimmer Train for their New Writers Award, won the Jim Cash Creative Writing Award for Fiction, and has been nominated for the Pushcart Prize. Michael's writing has appeared in Juked, Michigan Quarterly Review, Monkeybicycle, Heavy Feather Review, Duende, Vulture, Splitsider, and elsewhere.

Additional information can be found at www.michaelaferro.com.



The 2019 Washtenaw Reads pick was announced on October 9th: [*Reading with Patrick: A Teacher, A Student, and a Life-Changing Friendship*](#) by Michelle Kuo. [Washtenaw Reads](#) is a county-wide program that encourages community members to read the same book and connect to discuss it at various book discussion events [scheduled throughout the county](#) during the months of January and February. There will be plenty of copies of the book available at libraries throughout the county (and likely the bookstore too!), as well as an author event with Michelle Kuo at Rackham Auditorium on Wednesday, January 16th at 7 pm. Mark your calendars!

is in general. It is not expense free, however, as it is not quite self-sustaining when it comes to books, especially children's books. I pick them up from garage sales and such. I'm always looking for donations.

Rachel: Is there anything else you'd like to share?

Kathleen: I decided to always keep a pen and post-it notes inside the library. Neighbors donating books can write a mini review and stick it to the cover of their book. Visitors can also leave us a note with ideas or comments. Some people have started to leave bookmarks, too.

I'm also a "Book Fairy" and have on occasion put into my LFL a few copies of books that I feel are especially important, the latest being [*Just Mercy*](#) by Bryan Stevenson, which I deliberately bought multiple copies of for this purpose. Book Fairies hide books all over, so I don't just leave them in our LFL, but at coffee shops, etc. I mention it here because people can get involved with spreading the joy and learning of books even if they don't have the ways or means of an LFL. Check out

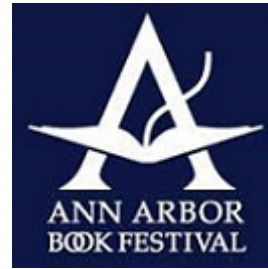
Book Fairies here:

ibelieveinbookfairies.com

--LFL Steward Kathleen Wright is a Young Fives Kindergarten teacher with the Ann Arbor Public Schools. When not working on the plethora of activities associated with teaching and kids, she loves reading, storytelling, writing on her [blog](#), and spending time with her husband and their new puppy and kitten, Phippenwyck and Smudge.



It is with great sadness that we share the news that Little Free Library creator [Todd Bol](#) passed away on [October 18th](#) after a recent cancer diagnosis. Todd's vision of connecting communities and providing access to books for all has inspired a worldwide movement, with 75,000 registered (and certainly countless more!) libraries in 88 countries. The Ann Arbor Book Society is grateful for this movement that has allowed us to connect with and share the unique stories of LFL stewards in our own community and know the world will continue to become a better place because of Todd's visionary work.



We would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to the board of the Ann Arbor Book Festival for their generous donation to the Ann Arbor Book Society. The Ann Arbor Book Festival (AABF) dissolved in October 2017 after 14 years of celebrating Ann Arbor's writing and reading community through their annual Writer's Conference, Street Fair, and Book Crawl. The Ann Arbor Book Society is grateful for this financial support that will allow us to carry on the spirit of AABF's work of celebrating Ann Arbor's book community.

Snapshot of the Past



"Reading books needn't be an entirely sedentary activity, as the Jones School classes of Mrs. Patricia McGraw and Mrs. Jane Steeb can testify. Members of the classes got together to prepare "boxcar stew" and "stone soup" as described in books carrying those titles which the children read. Left to right are: Curtis Davis, Alicia Jones, I. Tien Yeh, and Vandelynn Loundermon. It was a wonderful affair, they said." (November 13, 1964, Ann Arbor News. Courtesy of the [Ann Arbor District Library](#))

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