



Good vs Evil Sundays

Discussing “Moralities of Everyday Life,” a MOOC (Massive Open Online Course)

By Patti Mallin, Library Instructor

How It Works

We disagree. Respectfully and regularly, we disagree. We share poetry, recent research on empathy, and links to Young Adult literature and YouTube videos. We are fueled by coffee and sugar. We marvel that every member of the group contributes substantively to the discussion. We are academics and parents and students and therapists and doctors and ministers and lifelong learners. We are from the ‘hood.

We are the dozen or so library patrons and staff who gather on Sunday afternoons to discuss “Moralities of Everyday Life,” a free online course led by Yale’s Paul Bloom. Along with 60,000 other students around the world, we watch Professor Bloom’s lectures on our own during the week, study the readings, TED talks and guest lectures he recommends, and some of us even take the weekly quizzes to keep ourselves honest.

For many of us, the really meaty bits are when we get together to talk about the week’s course material, face to face. This is the fourth MOOC for which the Library has provided this opportunity. It is also the most well-attended, personal, and even boisterous to date.

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Participants at the February 9th discussion included Sparky Breeskin, Claudine Schweber, Wayne Sherwood, Bhagwant Khalsa, David Meyers, Hannah Joyner, Rebecca Brown., Abraham Joyner-Meyers, Patti Mallin, and Beth Allen.



Good vs Evil Sundays

Continued from page 1

When the topic is morality, and we study the origins of notions of right and wrong, good and evil, we can't help but apply it to our own experience, decisions and beliefs about parenting, policies, philanthropy. Are our moral codes governed by our emotions, reason, both? Do they originate in biology? How do we extend our concern for family and friends to strangers?

We are academics and parents and students and therapists and doctors and ministers and lifelong learners.



For more information about our MOOC group and joining us contact Patti Mallin at the Library pattim@takomaparkmd.gov. (To learn more about Patti, see p 7.)

The Friends Annual Meeting

By Pat Hanrahan

All are welcome to join the Friends to hear our fascinating and entertaining speaker Armando Trull!

**Tuesday,
March 25th**

“This is Armando Trull reporting from...” Listeners to WAMU’s daily news are familiar with WAMU’s Senior Reporter Armando Trull who travels the region, filing stories from the site of a large fire, or surrounded by demonstrators at the US Supreme Court, or driving the Inter-County Connector on Day One, or the site of a breaking news event in the DC metro area. Listen to Armando and you are there as he vividly recreates the scene, brings humor when he can, and keeps us informed of what’s happening in our neighborhoods.

FTPML is delighted that award-winning Armando Trull will speak at our Annual Meeting in the library. All are invited to meet him at the reception and learn from his tales as a “crossover” journalist—Spanish to English and television to radio. Armando will also tell us how media technologies have changed and how these developments have influenced the industry.

Armando’s career began in 1988 in Miami where he reported for the CBS TV affiliate and was chief assignment editor at Chanel 51/Telemundo TV. He arrived in D.C. in 1992 as News Director and Senior Correspondent for UPI Radio’s Spanish

Resources

The Library owns a copy of Paul Bloom’s recent book, *Just Babies*, which is fodder for some of the course discussions. Bloom moves way beyond research on babies however. One guest lecturer studies empathy and morality in non-human animals (ask any of us about the behavior differences between chimpanzees and bonobos). Another lecturer shared his experience with testing for psychopathy from which we learned that one in thirty people may be considered a psychopath. There are only a dozen of us in the group, so we feel pretty good about that. One or more additional MOOCs will happen throughout the Spring, and if interest and demand hold steady, we look forward to disagreeing, respectfully and regularly, about other topics well into next Fall.

Division. Subsequently, he worked for Univision TV, was bureau chief for the Hispanic Radio Network and the senior producer for TV Azteca’s first DC bureau. He has filed stories for the BBC, RFI and Carol radio. He returned to English language reporting in 2007 when he joined WUSA9, the CBS TV affiliate in Washington.

Armando talents extend to making documentary films and a successful career as a voiceover artist. He has won an Emmy, the International Telly Award and a Certificate of Excellence US/International Film and Video Festival for his work.

As a journalist, Armando has filed from South and Central America, the Caribbean and Europe. He has reported on hurricanes, refugee camps, wars and the Olympics to list just a few topics from a colorful career.

March 25 promises to be a fascinating and entertaining evening, and we hope everyone will join us at 7:30 p.m. in the library’s children’s room.

A brief Friends meeting and Board election will follow Armando’s talk which all are welcome to attend and then visit with the speaker and enjoy refreshments.

Members of the Friends of the Library celebrate the opening of the Friends first Little Free Library January 4th, 2014.

The COOP greeted this addition to their street with hot chocolate for everyone on this cold afternoon.



Little Free Libraries in Takoma Park

What's better than a library that is open seven days a week?

A Little Free Library where you can find a good book 24 hours a day!

By Pat Hanrahan

What They Are

Little Free Libraries (LFL) are small houses for books. LFLs have one or more shelves and a door that is easy to open but protects the contents from bad weather. They are located in public spaces. The books inside may be borrowed by anyone.

LFLs promote a love of books and reading. As this is also a goal of the Friends of the Takoma Park Maryland Library, we purchased a LFL to install outside the Takoma Park Food Coop.

This first Friends' LFL contains an array of books that residents can take any time, day or night. There is more information on the Friends website and Facebook site, and of course at the COOP.

LFLs already exist in Takoma Park. One is on Hilltop Road near Sligo Creek, and is the project of Cub Scout Troup 33. Another was built by neighbors and is in front of 22 Sherman Avenue. The third is in Takoma DC, on Aspen St. NW, and was erected by Ken Samson. Visit them, too!

How The Idea Started

LFLs were born in Wisconsin when Tod Bol constructed a small replica of a one-room schoolhouse and filled it with books for public use. He was inspired by Andrew Carnegie who launched public libraries, by librarians who in the late 1800's traveled throughout Wisconsin making books available to readers in isolated places, and by grassroots empowerment movements worldwide.

A Contagious Idea

The idea was contagious. When others learned about Mr. Bol's effort to put books into readers' hands, they started erecting LFLs in their home towns. This was in 2009. By 2011, there were nearly 400 LFLs in the United States. The movement has grown far beyond Wisconsin or even the U.S. The Little Free Library program born of this groundswell estimated that there will be 10,000 to 12,000 LFLs around the world in January 2014! Read more about their efforts and see examples of creative LFLs the world over at www.littlefreelibrary.org.

Take a book anytime, leave a book when you can.



A LFL on Sherman Avenue with colorful bottle caps for siding.

Thanks Friends!

The Friends support activities for all ages. Your membership donations and our book sales make these programs possible. Please check the red expiration date on your address label to find out if it is time to renew your membership donation. Invite your friends to join too!

A Remembrance of Proust Past

By Phillip F. Schewe



“Every reader, as he reads, is actually the reader of himself. The writer’s work is only a kind of optical instrument he provides the reader so he can discern what he might never have seen in himself without this book. The reader’s recognition in himself of what the book says is the proof of the book’s truth.”

—Marcel Proust

Takoma Park has enough serious readers that it can support two book clubs in the Community Center: one that meets every other month to discuss current books in one evening and another that meets twice a year to discuss a big book. Big, in this case, means literary masterpieces often big in size and big in import. The Big-book discussions usually stretch out over four or five sessions and begin with a lecture given by a scholar on that book.

The last big book considered, in fall 2013, was Marcel Proust’s *Swann’s Way*, the first in a sequence of seven books that constitute a giant novel whose title is *A Remembrance of Things Past*, sometimes translated from French as *In Search of Lost Time*. Most who attended could attest to the book’s beautiful prose and psychological depth. Most would also admit to feeling some kind of exhaustion. Sentences that rolled out across a whole page with heavily nested dependent clauses made for slow going.

Consequently, a topic of discussion, week after week, was why masterpieces are so difficult. A literary savant—possibly Samuel Johnson—said that for some great books it is more satisfying to have read than to be reading them. I can’t fully allow myself to admit this to myself. Reading a book can be compared to slaking a thirst for artistry. If so, then reading 3000 pages of this entire 7-novel sequence is like trying to drink a gallon of cognac; it’s very fine but you have to take it in small sips.

Proust was enjoyable. *Swann’s Way* is a twofold tale: the story of a rich man, Charles Swann, foolishly falling in love with a coquette; and the coming-of-age of the adolescent narrator, the boy Marcel, who struggles to make sense of his budding artistic sensibility. The love story is banal in its plot but rich in psychological nuance, and it eventually ties in with Marcel’s precocious grasp of adult desire.

Our best discussions of the book were (I thought) those that sought to describe how Proust portrays moment-by-moment reality. In this ability he has few peers. One of those peers, James Joyce, had been the subject of the Big-book club’s previous outing, *Ulysses*. And, yes, the *Ulysses* discussion, strung out over six meetings, was also exhausting. It was two gallons of cognac. But exhausting in the way that a good physical workout is exhausting—tiring and exhilarating. Maybe those are necessary qualities in great art.

Phillip Schewe works at the University of Maryland. He is the author of The Grid, a book about how society uses and loses electricity, and Maverick Genius, a biography of the scientist Freeman Dyson.

Friends Great Big Book Club to Discuss Homer’s *The Iliad*

Opening presentation by Dr. Frederick Winter, March 19, 7:30pm, Takoma Park Community Center

After years of reading 19th and 20th century classics — among them, *War and Peace*, *The Brothers Karamazov*, and *Les Miserables* — the reading group is stepping back to the beginnings of it all with four discussions of *The Iliad*, the great Homeric epic that pits the Achaeans against the Trojans and divides the gods against each other. We are witness to the mortal themes — valor, cowardice, anger, love, betrayal — amidst a ten-year war instigated by the abduction of Helen, the world’s greatest beauty, by the Trojan prince Paris. Achilles, Agamemnon, Odysseus, Hektor are only a few of the larger-than-life combatants that we will follow in our reading.

Dr. Frederick Winter, former professor of classics at the City University of New York, and classical archaeologist, will give an introductory talk guiding us through the world of Homer and the poem that has engaged us from antiquity.

Everyone is welcome to join us for the introductory presentation and for any or all of our discussions. If you don’t have your own copy of *The Iliad*, check out our library, which has multiple copies. For more information, see the Friends website — www.ftplm.org; you can also contact the library at 301-891-7259, or write library director Ellen Robbins, ellenr@takomaparkmd.gov.

Books that Matter

By Merill Leffler

In November 2005, the Friends Bimonthly book group met for the first time and discussed *The Color of Water*, the compelling story of James McBride's search to uncover the identity of his extraordinary mother. On April 9th, more than fifty books later, we will discuss McBride's *The Good Lord Bird*, the 2013 National Book Award winner for fiction.

Over these last eight years, we have had wide-ranging discussions of marvelous books. From modern classics — for instance, *Catch-22*, *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, William Faulkner's *As I Lay Dying*, *The Grapes of Wrath*, and *All the King's Men* — to contemporary fiction such as Alice Munroe's *Selected Stories*, Jesmyn Ward's *Salvage the Bones*, Jhumpa Lahiri's *The Namesake*, and Junot Diaz's

The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao. In addition to novels by American writers, we have read books by authors from Africa (Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*; Alan Paton's *Cry, The Beloved Country*), Great Britain, France, Italy, Canada, and Palestine. Each of these books gives us a unique lens to see into ways of life that differ from our own — in their often intense focusing, they widen our sometimes-parochial experience and enable us to understand lives that we would rarely come into contact with. Our discussions have added to that understanding as each reader brings his or her own unique insights.

So join us! Everyone is welcome. To get on the book group mailing list, email Ellen Robbins at ellenr@takomaparkmd.gov.

Kay Daniels-Cohen

By Ellen Arnold-Robbins

We will miss our Friend.

We at the Library mourn the passing of Kay Daniels-Cohen, and we extend our heartfelt sympathy to her husband Jack, brother Buddy, and her many, many friends. We also celebrate her life and her wonderful spirit.

The Takoma Park Library enjoyed a special relationship with Kay. She was an avid and eclectic reader. Before her City Council duties kept her busy, she attended many of the Friends Reading Group discussions—bringing copious notes and contributing insightful comments about the authors.



Kay (left) and Ellen shared cashier duties at many of the Friends Book Sales.

Kay was an active Friend of the Library. She ran the Board elections at their annual meetings, and helped at the book sales. She read at our annual Favorite Poem Evenings—usually coming in a colorful costume. One such occasion occurred on Kay's birthday. She came and read anyway, and we celebrated with two birthday cakes that year—one provided by us, and another unexpectedly brought by Kay.

Most recently she was the person largely responsible for the Library's being able to open on Sundays. This was an endeavor that was dear to her heart and has been enthusiastically received by our patrons.

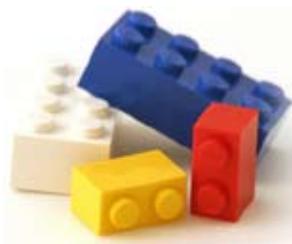
Kay was not only an ardent Library supporter, but a believer in the power of conviction, and of the joy to be felt in active effort, and in living fully—every hour of every day.

Spring Book Sale
Saturday May 17
10am-3pm

Volunteers are needed to set-up and to cashier at the book sale. It's fun! To volunteer contact Ellen Arnold-Robbins at ellenr@takomaparkmd.gov. Community service hours are available for high school students.

Children's and Teen Programs

By Karen MacPherson



Sunday May 18, the Library will host our first LEGO Club program, made possible through the generosity of the Friends' purchase of all the LEGO materials.

We have a full line-up of great children's and teen programs, some of them one-time offerings and other programs that are part of our regular schedule. Many of these programs are made possible by the support of our wonderful Friends of the Takoma Park Maryland Library.

Here's a brief run-down of some of our special programs. March 17, we'll celebrate **St. Patrick's Day** with an evening program of Irish folk tales, do a simple craft and enjoy lemonade and cookies.

On the 31st of March we'll mark the 50th anniversary of the publication of *Harriet the Spy* by Louise Fitzhugh with a book discussion (for both kid and adult "Harriet" fans) and then offer a craft session at which participants can decorate their own spy journal. Naturally, we'll conclude with a birthday cake!

In April, in honor of **National Poetry Month**, we'll do a kids' program focused on learning to write simple—and fun—poetry. And on April 7, we'll host a program for teens (and adults) featuring graphic novelist Danica Novgorodoff, who will talk about her new book, *The Undertaking of Lily Chen*, as part of our partnership with Politics & Prose Bookstore.

On May 21 our Politics & Prose partnership will allow us to offer another graphic novel program, featuring Ben Hatke, author and illustrator of the popular *Zita the Spacegirl* series. On Sunday, May 31, we've sched-

uled a second "**Fairies**" program at which young participants will read books about fairies and then create fairy-themed crafts.

In June, we'll launch our **Summer Quest** summer reading program, which is created annually by library assistant—and artiste extraordinaire—Dave Burbank. We're the only library in the area to create our own summer program, thanks to the Friends.

In addition to these special programs, we'll also be offering a number of more regular programs. Our new Sunday librarian, Kati Nolfi—who developed both the "Fairies" and the LEGO programs—also heads up a trio of once-a-month programs: **Yoga Storytime** for kids ages 3-5 and for grown-ups (March 2 and April 6); **Sunday Crafts for Kids** ages 8-14 (March 16 and April 27); and **Bedtime Stories** (usually the first Tuesday of each month at 7 p.m.)

Other regular offerings include two weekly programs: Tuesday morning **Circle Times** at 10 a.m. and 11 a.m., and **Spanish Circle Time**, led by Senora Geiza on Thursdays at 10:30 a.m. In addition, Madame Marie leads our **Petites Chansons/French Circle Time** program one Saturday each month at 10:30; because that program—the only one in the area—isn't on a set Saturday, it's best to register at www.tinyurl.com/tplibraryevents to receive regular emails for upcoming program dates. We're grateful to our Friends for funding both Spanish Circle Time and Petites Chansons.

Favorite Books for After-School Fun

Ms Sandra Boone is shown here accepting additional books for her after-school and homework program at the New Hampshire Recreation Center of Takoma Park. The Friends have continued to make annual additions to the book cart.

The children not only have new experiences with reading but Ms Boone has each child take a turn at being "Librarian" with responsibility for checking the books in and out. They do a fine job as no books have gone missing or been mistreated!

This year the children themselves picked the books for their library cart and were knowledgeable and wise about their requests.



Takoma Park's Poetry Walk-2014

In April, Carroll Avenue, the Community Center and city parks will be abloom with poetry once again — if it's spring, it's also **Spring for Poetry in Takoma Park**. This year the poems will also be seen on New Hampshire Avenue near the Crossroads Farmers Market.

The poetry posters that first appeared on poles throughout the city in 2007 have continued to sprout anew each year, thanks to Professor Andrea Adams' second-year design students at Montgomery College and the Friends of the Takoma Park Maryland Library that initiated the project and support it financially. A small committee of poets selects poems each year — then Professor Adams' students take over, each designing two posters. This year will see some 30 new posters and includes poems by contemporary and older poets, among them William Blake, "The Tyger," Robert Frost, "Design," e.e. cummings, "I carry your heart with me," Marianne Moore, "A Jelly-Fish," W.S. Merwin, "The Night Plums," and Lucille Clifton's "My Mama moved among the days."

See www.ftpml.org for past poems and let us hear from you about the posters — which ones you especially like and poems that you'd like to see student designers take on in the future. The 2014 poems will be posted with their locations on the Friends website by late April.

My mama moved among the days

My mama moved among the days
like a dreamwalker in a field;
seemed like what she touched was her
seemed like what touched her couldn't hold,
she got us almost through the high grass
then seemed like she turned around and ran
right back in
right back on in



More MOOCS

March: "**American Capitalism: A History**"

April: "**Warhol...Celebrity, Sex, Money, Death and Time.**"

For registration and details: www.takomapark.info/library/ or 301-891-7259.

Our MOOC Facilitator

Patti Mallin is an Instructional Assistant in the Library's Computer Center, and along with Rebecca Brown, originated and leads our increasingly popular discussions around on-line courses (MOOCS).

Patti comes to the Library with impressive credentials. At the Western Behavioral Sciences Institute in La Jolla, CA, she trained and supported policy-level executives in a pioneering leadership education program. An early experiment in distance education, it was conducted through computer conferences on a private on-line system, with face to face gatherings every six months.

In many cases, it was the first time the CEO or VP used a personal computer themselves, rather than having administrative staff do it for them.

At The Advocacy Institute in DC, Patti trained activists working at the community, national and international levels to use the Internet for social change. Following that, she supported communities of peace, environmental and labor activists through work at the Institute for Global Communications.

Patti lives and works in Takoma Park, and is the proud parent of a 7th grader at Takoma Middle School.

Highlights and Events

Favorite Poem Evening Returns by Popular Demand!

This celebration of poems will be held in the Library on Tuesday April 22, at 7:30 p.m. and will be hosted by Takoma Park Poet Laureate Merrill Leffler.

The *Favorite Poem Evening*, sponsored jointly by the Takoma Park Maryland Library and the Friends of the Library, is now in its 14th year. Last year's event drew a record number of readers and poetry enthusiasts.

If you would like to participate, choose a poem you have read and admired by a published poet other than you or your friends. Poems written in languages other than English are welcome, if they are accompanied by an English translation. There are plenty of ideas for possible choices in the Library's poetry collections.

Send the name and author of the poem you have chosen and your own name and

generic occupation for inclusion in a printed program to Ellen Robbins at the Takoma Park Maryland Library, 101 Philadelphia Ave., Takoma Park, MD 20912, or by e-mail to ellenr@takomaparkmd.gov. **The deadline for submission is Thursday, April 18th.**

Originally conceived as a national event by U.S. Poet Laureate Robert Pinsky, the *Favorite Poem Evening* in Takoma Park has been a lovely, warm and community building event for more than a dozen years. All ages are welcome. Please attend and bring your friends and neighbors! Refreshments will be provided by the Friends of the Library.

Library Survey Completed

The Community Needs Assessment and Visioning for a 21st Century Public Library survey was researched and prepared for the Takoma Park Maryland Library by Providence Associates in the final months of 2013. It was completed at the end of January 2014, and the final report is now available at the following link which is also on the Friends website home page www.ftpml.org:

<https://s3.amazonaws.com/documents/takomapark/public/news/TPPL-community-needs-assessment-and-visioning-for-a-21st-century-library.pdf>

The report contains a summary of 252 survey responses, including 212 open-ended comments, and responses from seven facilitated "community conversations" with residents, Library and City staff, and City Council members. It also summarizes 'best practices' of 21st century public libraries and consultant recommendations—followed by an appendix detailing the data that was gathered. We are excited to share this report with the Friends and the Takoma Park community.



101 Philadelphia Ave., Takoma Park, MD 20912

www.cityoftakomapark.org/library.

Visit the Friends at www.ftpml.org

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as of January, 2014

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Director of the Takoma Park Maryland Library

with the help of Clair Garman, webmaster

A color version of this newsletter can be viewed and printed at www.ftpml.org/newsletters/spring2014.pdf

Become a Friend...



Friends of the Takoma Park Maryland Library
www.ftpml.org

To become a Friend for one year please fill out this form and send it with your member contribution to:

FTPML

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Make your payment out to Friends of the Takoma Park Maryland Library, Inc.

FTPML is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Your gift is greatly appreciated and fully deductible as a charitable contribution.

If you're interested in donating time and/or expertise, please let us know:

- Book Sales (semi-annual or mini-sales at Farmers' Market)
- Publicity Committee (newsletter, flyers, printing, mailings, list serve liaison, etc.)
- Table Staffing (staffing a table at the Farmers' Market or other event)
- Board of Directors or Committee Chair

May we include your name if we exchange our list of members with other Takoma Park community not-for-profit organizations? Yes No

All are cordially invited to the

Friends of the Takoma Park Maryland Library Annual Meeting
Tuesday, March 25, 2014 at 7:30pm in the Library

featuring **Armando Trull**

**Popular international
and local journalist
Armando Trull will speak
at our annual meeting.**

Listeners to WAMU know that
Armando brings local news alive
for them and often with humor!

Armando's work as a journalist has also taken him to South and Central
America, the Caribbean and Europe. He has reported on hurricanes, ref-
ugee camps, wars and the Olympics to list just a few topics from his long
and colorful career. Armando will discuss changing media technologies
and how these changes are influencing news reporting.



**Friends of the Takoma
Park Maryland Library**

101 Philadelphia Avenue
Takoma Park, MD 20912

www.ftpml.org

The evening's events will end with socializing and refreshments. Elections for the FTPML Board of Directors will be held following the speaker's presentation. Nonmembers are welcome to leave or stay for the election.

Members of the Friends whose dues are current are eligible to serve on the Board and vote in the election. Those interested in serving on the Board may contact Nominating Committee member Miriam Szapiro at mszapiro@gmail.com.

New and renewed memberships will be accepted at the meeting.