



WORDS BY THE WATER

The Drury Lane Books Newsletter

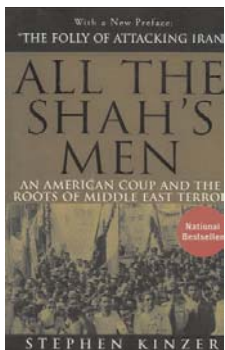
Vol. 15, May 2011

TALKING BOOKS:

Reading about the Islamic World by Joan Drury

It started with **Moonlight on the Avenue of Faith** by Gina B. Nahai, a beautifully written and fascinating novel of life in the Jewish ghetto of Tehran. What I found most puzzling in this wonderful book was the constant references to some meddling the U.S. apparently engineered in Iran during the early 1950s with which Iranians were clearly familiar, but I had no idea to what these suggestions were alluding. I decided I needed to know more about Iran's politics and recent history.

On recommendation, I next read Stephen Kinzer's **All the Shah's Men**. What an incredible eye-opener! This is a non-fiction book that reads like a thriller. Sixty years ago, the United States overthrew another country's government for the first time. Iran's Prime Minister, Mohammad Mossadegh, was democratically elected and very popular because he was committed to creating a modern Iran that cared about all of its citizens, especially the poor. Mossadegh and Iran, in general, were pro-American but more focused on Iran's problems and development.



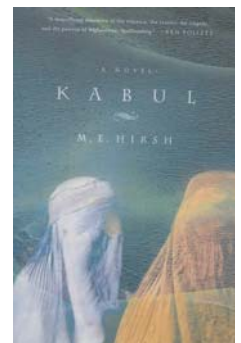
Nonetheless, in 1953, the CIA (concerned about imaginary Communism) created an uprising, deposing Mossadegh and reinstating Mohammed Reza Shah, a tyrant who was only interested in lining his own pockets. The legacy of this interference by the U.S. was years of growing anti-Americanism fed by also growing Islam fundamentalism, not only in Iran but throughout the Islamic world. This resulted in the 1979 Revolution in Iran, the growth of organizations like the Taliban and other terrorist groups, eventually leading to the destruction of the World Trade Center in NYC. If one wishes to better understand Islamic fanatics and anti-American feelings, this book is a must-read!

About this point, I decided it was time for me to read more about the Middle East, as the United States' destiny seems to be increasingly tied with that of Islamic countries. **Reading Lolita in Tehran: A Memoir in Books** by Azar Nafisi came next. It turned out to be a delight because it was really about loving books, the kind of story in which any book-lover revels! In secret, Nafisi met with her best women students to read forbidden Western classics by Jane Austen, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Henry James, Vladimir Nabokov, and others.



Each week, while these women risked being raided by morality squads and being imprisoned, their country was tightening its hold on its society. Fundamentalists seized control of the universities and censors stifled any artistic expression. Reading this book was not only wonderful because of its dealing with books I've loved, but also because I learned a lot about how women were treated in an Islamic fundamentalist country in current times.

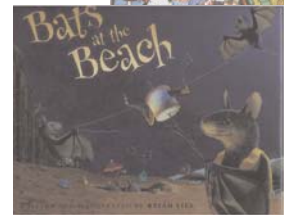
I not only read non-fiction books because, although they give me a picture of the truth through facts, fiction presents me with a larger look at truth through the telling of stories. **Kabul** by M.E. Hirsh is just such a book. The Anwari family seems very familiar: the eldest and "good" son; the restless and confused daughter; and the



The Muffin Man Recommends



- I like Myself** by Karen Beaumont
- Take Me Out of the Bathtub** by Alan Katz
- Do Not Open This Book** by Michaela Muntean
- By Mo Willems: **We Are in a Book**, **There's a Bird On My Head**, **Knuffle Bunny** --- all three of them!
- The End** by David LaRochelle
- Stand Back, Said the Elephant, "I'm Going to Sneeze!"**
by Patricia Thomas, Pattye Echo Thomas
- Any title by Dr. Seuss; especially **Fox in Socks** and **The Lorax**
- Bats at the Beach** and **Bats at the Library** by Brian Lies
- I Feel Silly** by Jamie Lee Curtis
- The Library Dragon** by Carman Agra Deedy



WHAT BOOK GROUPS IN COOK COUNTY ARE READING

Women's Book Group

- The Bell** by Iris Murdoch
- Tasting the Sky: A Palestinian Childhood**
by Ibtisam Barakat
- 84, Charing Cross Road** by Helene Hanff

No Guilt Book Group

- The Lemon Tree** by Sandy Tolan
- Where the Red Fern Grows**
by Wilson Rawls
- Lake of Sorrows** by Erin Hart



The Bookies

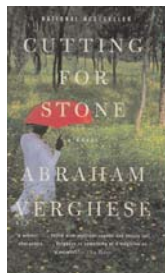
- The Vagrants** by Yiyun Li
- Cutting For Stone**
by Abraham Verghese
- Strange As This Weather Has Been**
by Ann Pancake

Care Center Book Group

- Betsy and Saganaga** by Betsy Powell
- Downtown Grand Marais** by Eugene Glader
- The Uncommon Reader** by Alan Bennett

Avid Readers Book Group

- Italian Shoes** by Henning Mankell
- The Housekeeper and the Professor**
by Yoko Ogawa
- Brooklyn** by Colm Toibin



Pincushion Book Group:

- The Book Thief** by Markus Zusak
- The Battle Hymn of the Tiger Mother**
by Amy Chua
- Rat** by Ferranda Eberstadt

No Name Book Group

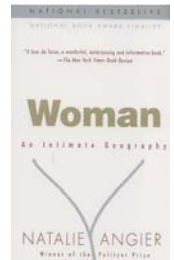
- The Count of Monte Cristo** by Alexandre Dumas
- Conversations With Myself** by Nelson Mandela

Whole Lot of Women Wine and Words

- Life and Times of the Thunderbolt Kid**
by Bill Bryson
- Black Like Me** by John Howard Griffin
- House on Mango Street** by Sandra Cisneros

Boundary Readers Book Group

- (they read selections from an author)
- Ann Lamott: **Operating Instructions**, **Bird By Bird**, **Blue Shoe**
- Jonathan Franzen: **The Corrections**, **Freedom**



All Things Tudor Readers

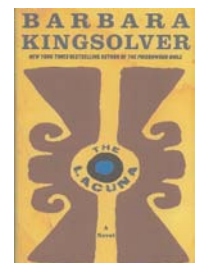
- The Tudors: The Complete Story of England's Most Notorious Dynasty** by G. J. Meyer
- Heartstone** by C. J. Sansom

Westenders Book Group

- Woman: An Intimate Geography**
by Natalie Angier
- Jane Eyre** by Charlotte Bronte
- Breaking Trail** by Arlene Blum

Book Lovers Club:

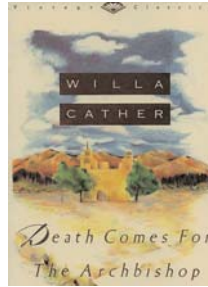
- The Thirteenth Tale**
by Diane Setterfield
- The Lacuna** by Barbara Kingsolver
- Love in a Cold Climate**
by Nancy Mitford



STAFF RECOMMENDS

Joan Drury

Death Comes for the Archbishop by Willa Cather is a beautifully written book in which Cather completely and thoroughly captures the archbishop's day-to-day life as well as his humanity. As a reader I was not only enthralled but thoroughly engaged with this story. Cather's descriptions are detailed and awe-inspiring. A truly stunning book!



Winter Wheat by Mildred Walker is an exquisitely-written book about Ellen Webb, who is struggling to understand herself and her parents and her love of the big-sky country of Montana. The landscape becomes another character, so rich and detailed are the descriptions. An excellent read and a superb story!

The Sound of Language by Amulya Malladi is the story of a young Afghani widow who's been through terrible times with the Taliban and her subsequent immigration to Denmark. She develops an unlikely but dear alliance with an elderly Dane widower, who needs her as much as she needs him. In this book, most of the Danes have erroneous and negative stereotypes of the Muslim immigrants as most of the Afghani immigrants have the same misconceptions of the Danes.

Complicated connections slowly begin to alter these attitudes, and everyone grows. A carefully portrayed story about lives you both care for and applaud. I loved it!



Lee Stewart

In **Little Boy Lost** by Marghanita Laski, Hillary, a man who lost his wife during World War II, has an infant son who has disappeared or is dead. He discovers that his son may,

after all, still be alive and living in an orphanage in Normandy. The story, which was first published over sixty years ago, is a page-turner. This book had me hooked until the very end.

The Vagrants by Yiyun Li is set in the small town of Muddy River, China in 1979 in the wake of Mao's death. There are many characters with stories to tell, full of secret hopes, longings, and regrets. The characters are connected in unexpected ways

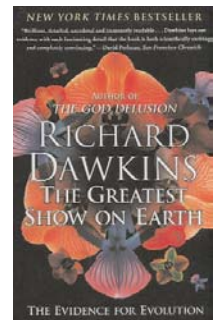


and the stories converge in the end. It's not a political novel, though it's about a political time. Above all, I think that it is a beautifully written, tragic story.

The Thirteenth Tale by Diane Setterfield is an old fashioned gothic mystery, a story to get lost in – complete with an English Manor, the moors, ghosts, and secrets. Vida Winter, an elderly reclusive author tells her story to a biographer who has her own secrets and story to tell. The characters are fascinating and there are plenty of twists and turns. I especially liked the parts where the biographer talks about her love of books, as I understood her passion.

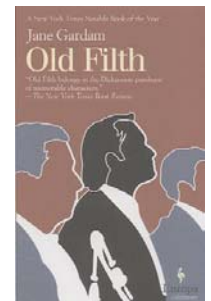
Bruce Stahly

It's tough for me to get out of the fiction groove: it is deep and well-worn. But sometimes I force myself, as I did recently for Richard Dawkins' **The Greatest Show on Earth: the Evidence for Evolution**. Dawkins does a wonderful job detailing how the fact of evolution illuminates the beauties and mysteries of the natural world. It is the sort of book that contains such choice morsels that it is almost impossible to refrain from sharing them with the person sitting next to you --- friend or stranger alike.



Another non-fiction book with astute observations about our world is Paul Theroux's **Ghost Train to the Eastern Star**. Theroux made his reputation years ago with his first "train" book, **The Great Railway Bazaar**, when he traveled east from London to Asia and back again. This book covers his experiences as he retraced his steps after so many years. The author's style is caustic and ironic, his observations always provocative.

But back to that fiction groove: the best novel I have read recently is **Old Filth**, by Jane Gardam. Despite the off-putting title (which is an acronym for "failed in London, try Hong Kong") the book is a tour-de-force, the story of Edward Feathers, a Raj orphan whose apparently uneventful life is recounted with wit and sympathy. Tales of the British Raj can feel a bit predictable sometimes, but this is an original book full of surprises. Another of Gardam's books, a volume of playful short stories called **The People on Privilege Hill**, is also fresh and witty.



EVENTS CALENDAR 2011

MAY

Store Hours, May 2–26:
Monday, Tuesday & Thursday, 11–4;
Friday and Saturday, 10–5;
Closed Wednesday & Sunday*
***Opening Sunday starting May 15th, 11–4**

Tuesday, May 17, 5–6 p.m.
Writer's Salon featuring **Danielle Sosin** reading from her new book **Long-Shining Waters**, set on the shore of Lake Superior.

Wednesday, May 25, 6:30 pm
Women's Book Group. Read **84, Charing Cross Road** by Helene Hanff and join the discussion.

9th Annual Memorial Weekend SALE May 27–30, 50% OFF A LARGE SELECTION OF BOOKS

Store Hours
Friday, May 27 – Tuesday, June 7:
Monday–Saturday 10–6, Sunday 10–4

Saturday, May 28 – Season opening for **The Muffin Man** at 11 a.m. Stories for young children.

Saturday, May 28, 5 p.m. – Writer's Salon featuring **Brian Freeman**, Minnesota Mystery writer, reading from his newest book **Bone House**.

Monday, May 30: Memorial Day Hours 10–4

JUNE

Saturdays in June, 11 am –**Muffin Man.** Stories for young children

Summer Hours begin Wed., June 8:
Monday–Saturday 10–8,
Sunday 10–4

Saturday, June 11, 5 p.m.
Writer's Salon with **Kent Nerburn** reading from his book **The Wolf At Twilight: An Indian Elder's Journey Through a Land of Ghosts and Shadows.**

Wednesday, June 15, 5–6 p.m.
Full Moon Reading featuring Tim Young outside on the lake shore.

Wednesday, June 22, 6:30 p.m.
Women's Book Group—call for title, read the book and join the discussion.

Saturday, June 25, 5 p.m.
Writer's Salon with poet **Mary Kay Rummel** reading from her newest work, **What's Left is the Singing.**

JULY

Saturdays in July, 11 a.m. - **Muffin Man.** Stories for young children.

Monday, July 4: Store Hours 10–4

Saturday, July 9, 5 p.m.
Writer's Salon and Publication Celebration with **Karen Lohn.** She will sign and discuss her new book **Peace Fibers: Stitching a Soulful World.** Refreshments and music.

Friday, July 15, 8 p.m.— **Full Moon Music Event** outside on the lake shore with local musicians, **Zabobo.**

Saturday, July 23, 5 p.m.
Writer's Salon with **Sheila O'Connor** reading from her new juvenile fiction **Sparrow Road.**

Wednesday, July 27, 6:30 p.m.
Women's Book Group—call for title, read the book and join the discussion.

AUGUST

Saturday, August 13, 20, and 27 at 11 a.m. **The Muffin Man.** Stories for young children.

Saturday, August 13, 5 p.m.
Writer's Salon with **Jean Husby** and illustrator, Scott Husby featuring Jean's new book of short stories, **Return to Willow Water.**

Wednesday, August 24, 6:30 p.m.
Women's Book Group—call for title, read the book and join the discussion.

Saturday, August 27, 5 p.m.
Writer's Salon with journalist **Laurie Hertzell** reading from her new book **News to Me: Adventures of an Accidental Journalist.**

SEPTEMBER

Saturdays in Sept., 11 a.m.—**The Muffin Man** . Stories for young children.

Saturday, September 5: Labor Day Store Hours 10–4

Store Hours Starting Sept. 6:
Monday–Saturday 10–5
Sunday 10–4

Saturday, Sept 10, 5 p.m. Writer's Salon with **Beryl Singleton Bissell** reading from **A View of the Lake.**

Monday, Sept 12, 5–6 p.m.
Full Moon Reading featuring Tom McCann outside on the lake shore.

Saturday, Sept 24, 5 p.m.— Writer's Salon with poet **Kathryn Kysar** reading from **Pretend the World.**

Wednesday, Sept 28, 6:30 p.m.
Women's Book Group—call for title, read the book and join the discussion.

OCTOBER

October Hours:
Monday, Tuesday & Thursday 10–4,
Friday & Sat. 10–5, Sunday 10–4*
Closed Wednesday
***Closed Sunday starting October 16**

Saturday, October 1, 5 p.m.
Writer's Salon with **Sarah Stonich** reading from her newest book **Shelter.**

Tuesday, October 11, 5–6 p.m.
Full Moon featuring Amanda Hand outside on the lake shore.

Friday-Saturday, October 21–22
****Moose Madness****
Saturday, Oct. 22 – **Moose a Rama** 11 a.m. with the **Muffin Man.**

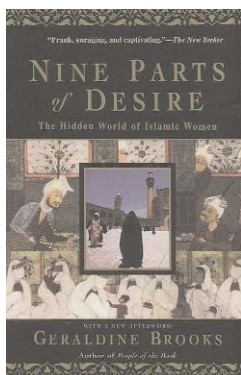
Wednesday, Oct 26, 6:30 p.m.
Women's Book Group— call for title, read the book, and join the discussion.

All events take place at Drury Lane Books unless otherwise noted. Call 387-3370 or 888-887-3370 or check our website (www.drurylanebooks.com) for later additions.

Reading About the Islamic World *continued from page 1*

wild, rebellious son. These simplistic labels all alter and deepen as their country and family are thrust into civil war, political intrigue, and tragedy in Afghanistan. This book gave me a broader understanding of the political unrest in Afghanistan in the seventies and eighties, culminating in the attempted Russian takeover to which the Afghans united with one another (often unlikely bed fellows) to drive the Russians out, resulting in the Taliban taking control. I now had some comprehension of current affairs in Afghanistan.

A good follow-up was **The Kite Runner** by Khaled Hosseini, a very personal tale dealing with current affairs in Afghanistan, regional and ethnic differences, and more about the Taliban. This is a beautifully told story and very informative.



Ibtisam Barakat's **Tasting the Sky: A Palestinian Childhood** leaps into Israel and Israeli territories filled with Palestinian refugees. This exquisite memoir of a wonderfully gifted girl is both hopeful and heartbreaking, tracing the years of a refugee child's life torn asunder by constant war. It opens the reader's eyes to the "other's" account by educating in the best manner, through storytelling.

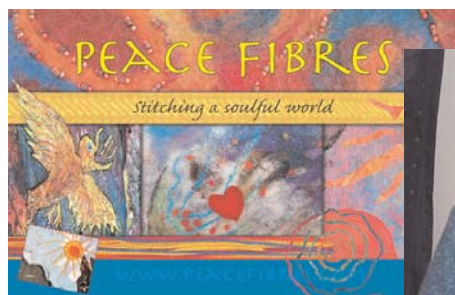
Other books I'd recommend are **A Thousand Splendid Suns** by Khaled Hosseini (Afghanistan), **Nine Parts of Desire: The Hidden World of Islamic Women** by Geraldine Brooks, **The Septembers of Shiraz** by Dalia Sofer (Iran), **The Reluctant Fundamentalist** by Mohsin Hamid, **The Swallows of Kabul** by Yasmina Khadra, (Afghanistan), **Naphtalene: A Novel of Baghdad** and many, many more. Besides which, I have a growing pile of yet-to-be-read books about various places and people in the Islamic world. This is a task that I highly advocate, both for educational purposes and pleasure.



Welcome Aboard

We welcome Carolyn Fritz. Carolyn is working at Drury Lane Books this summer. She is an artist and educator who interned at North House Folk School last summer. During the school year she works at Great Expectations School. She comes to Drury Lane with a love of books and the artistic expression of literature.

Carolyn's favorite book right now is **Art & Fear: Observations on the Perils (and Rewards) of Artmaking** by David Bayles & Ted Orland.



Writer's Salons

We are pleased at some of our Writer's Salons to help local writers celebrate their new work. The photograph on the right shows Kay Grindland signing her poetry book **Little Greens** at a 2010 salon.

This year look for Karen Lohn with her new book **Peace Fibers: Stitching a Soulful World**, Jean Husby with **Return to Willow Water**, and Beryl Singleton Bissel with **A View of the Lake**.

*"In truth I prefer the sound
of pages turning."*
*from After the Dinner Party
by Jane Kenyon*

The staff at Drury Lane Books are happy to take orders for books through the mail, internet or over the telephone. Arrange to pick them up at the store or have them shipped direct to your home.

DRURY LANE BOOKS

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Best Sellers at Drury Lane Books 2010-2011

Fiction

The Girl With the Dragon Tattoo by Stieg Larsson
The Girl Who Played With Fire by Stieg Larsson
Silent Words by Joan Drury
The Girl Who Kicked the Hornet's Nest
by Stieg Larsson
Return to Willow Water by Jean Husby
The Lacuna by Barbara Kingsolver
Heaven's Keep by William Kent Krueger
Little Bee by Chris Cleave
The Elegance of the Hedgehog by Muriel Barbery
Haunted Ground by Erin Hart
The Florist's Daughter by Patricia Hampl
The Absolutely True Diary of a Part Time Indian
by Sherman Alexie
The Help by Kathryn Stockett
Freedom by Jonathan Franzen
The False Mermaid by Erin Hart
Vermillion Drift by William Kent Krueger
Good Night Minnesota
by Gamble and Veno
Closed in Silence by Joan Drury
Still Life by Louise Penney
Cutting For Stone by Abraham Verghese



Non Fiction

The Rock Pickers Guide by Mark Stensaas
Downtown Grand Marais by Eugene Glader
Lake Superior Rocks and Minerals Guide
by Bob Lynch
Amazing Agates by Scott Wolter
Angry Trout Café Notebook
by George Wilkes
The Little Greens by Kay Grindland
Wild Berries and Fruits Field Guide
by Teresa Marrone
My Stroke of Insight by Jill Bolte Taylor
Best Wild Rice Recipes by Bea Ojakangas
Story of Coast Guard Point by Harry Drabik
Lake Superior North Shore Experience
by Jay Steinke
Treasures of Minnesota's North Shore by Jim Cordes
Eat Pray Love by Elizabeth Gilbert
Minnesota Roadside Geology by Richard W. Ojakangas
Hanging On by Eleanor Jackson Stone
Night Sky, a Field Guide by Jonathan Poppele
This is Your Brain on Music by Daniel J. Levitin
Gunflint Trail Blazers by Beatrice Ogren
Fascinating Loons by Stan Tekiela

