FIFTH ANNUAL
RANCHO MIRAGE WRITERS FESTIVAL
AT THE RANCHO MIRAGE LIBRARY & OBSERVATORY
JANUARY 24–26, 2018
Welcome to the RANCHO MIRAGE WRITERS FESTIVAL!

We are celebrating year FIVE of this exciting Festival in 2018! This is where readers meet authors and authors get to know their enthusiastic readers. We dedicate all that happens at this incredible gathering to you, our Angels and our Readers.

The Rancho Mirage Writers Festival has a special energy level, driven by ideas and your enthusiasm for what will feel like a pop-up university where the written word and those who write have brought us together in a most appropriate venue — the Rancho Mirage Library and Observatory. The Festival starts fast and never lets up as our individual presenters and panels are eager to share their words and their thoughts. The excitement of books.

In 2013 we began to design the Rancho Mirage Writers Festival. Our Steering Committee kept its objective important and clear — to bring authors, their books, and our readers together in this beautiful resort city. In 2018 our mission remains the same, though the Festival has grown and gets even better this year.

The writers you read and the books that get us thinking and talking converge at the Festival to make January in the Desert, not only key to our season, but a centerpiece of our cultural life.

The Festival is a celebration of the written word. The Festival lives in our award-winning Library. Recent investments in the Library include:

- Windows in the John Steinbeck Room and the Jack London Room that can be darkened electronically making for a better presenter/audience experience.
- The new production booth in the Steinbeck Room will give our readers and authors as well as videographers even more professional programming quality.
- Upgrades to lighting in the Steinbeck, London, Disney, and Didion Rooms will make for a better Festival.

We also added gifts to the broad Library community:

- The Rancho Mirage Writers Festival Book Club with six high quality sessions annually.
- The Rancho Mirage Writers Festival Writers Series bringing the star quality of major authors as they add the Library to their book tours.
- “Best Books Made Into Movies” — a program with a caché all its own.

The Rancho Mirage Writers Festival honors the value of books in our national tradition of sharing ideas and the freedom to express them. You have helped to build the “intellectual village” we will share for the next three days.

Thank you to our forty-five authors. We are delighted to offer you the opportunity to be with our one thousand Angels and Readers.

Let the 2018 Rancho Mirage Writers Festival begin!

David Bryant
LIBRARY DIRECTOR

Jamie Kabler
FESTIVAL FOUNDER
We are pleased to bring you another year of exciting and thought-provoking programming. This year’s theme is *Gloriana Britannia!* Please join us in welcoming ten respected authors and special guests from across the pond. They include a renowned food critic who will talk about his favorite British comfort food and a distinguished historian and former Oxford professor who will share some of her favorite historical figures. Of course any celebration of Britain must include the royal family and so we open this year’s festival with Sally Bedell Smith in conversation with Patt Morrison on *The Royals.*

You will notice that we are featuring a lot more conversations this year. Many of the pairings are obvious while others less so. We hope these will result in some unexpected and robust dialogues!

We continue to offer a mix of fiction, biography, history and current events. This year’s 45 writers can claim Pulitzer Prizes, National Book Awards, MacArthur and Guggenheim Fellowships, People’s Choice Awards and an Oscar. In addition, we have a distinguished line up of 21 moderators and special guests—quite a few who call the Coachella Valley home.

Our goal is to present something of interest every hour in every room whether it is one of your favorite writers or someone entirely unfamiliar to you. Ralph Waldo Emerson wisely said, “Knowledge is when you learn something new every day.” Enjoy!

**Deborah Dejah**  
Director of Programming

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It is my honor to be the Executive Producer of the 2018 Rancho Mirage Writer’s Festival. Now, back to business: In five short years the Festival is all grown up, global in reach, and so full of readers and writers that my job has become steering this giant ship full of knowledge.

Since 2014, the Library has adapted to the Festival and vice versa. Our home is your home each day. Last year we even attracted the attention of C-SPAN, which aired our programming on their network. Meeting throughout the year, we are driven to improve the festival for our readers, angels, and writers. Every detail matters and giving you a fantastic experience is our mission:

- We are good listeners, please tell us how you like each session and the overall Festival.
- We have increased the time between sessions to give you an opportunity to navigate your way through five Library venues under one roof.
- We have limited the number of attendees at the festival, to help avoid congestion.
- We have secured discounts from local restaurants, so that you have an option at the end of each day to gather with friends over dinner to discuss books and authors.
- We have 85 sessions for you to choose from, all packed with learning opportunities in a broad range of topics.
- We want you to meet the authors and, if you like, to purchase their books.

From complimentary valet parking when you arrive, a staff of courteous and friendly volunteers to guide you, comfortable seating in all five rooms, and a wonderful mid-day lunch, we want you comfortable and focused on author talks. (Please be sure to fill out the comment cards that are available.)

I personally want to thank the Angels, Readers, and Writers for your participation and I look forward to greeting you each day. One favor, please thank our volunteer staff when you see them….they all work hard to make the festival a success and better every year.

Thank you so much for your support and please enjoy the 2018 Rancho Mirage Writer’s Festival!

**Debbie Green**  
Executive Producer
Dear Readers,

I am so happy to have served on the Rancho Mirage Writers Festival (RMWF) for the past five years; it really is wonderful to be part of this community event.

The goal for our RMWF program is to offer a rich and diverse reader experience. To that end, beginning in 2017, the Writers Festival Foundation has broadened the calendar of events to include standalone author programs, a film series and a book club. Our wish is for you to stay connected with the Writers Festival throughout the year by becoming familiar with the authors who are coming as well as get excited about them!

These new programs are free and all are welcome to attend! No registration required. Come as often as you can!

Following are some of the events that we are working on for 2018:

**Rancho Mirage Writers Festival Writers Series**
- We ask 6 – 8 authors a year to come and talk about their newest books
- More author talks are planned for February, March and April. Announcements forthcoming! Dates are based on the author’s availability.

**The Best Movies From Books, as selected by Peter Bart**
- Peter Bart, journalist and film producer, selects 6 – 8 films from the books to film genre to screen followed by a scintillating discussion with a behind-the-scenes look.
- Generally, the films will be screened at 2 pm on Thursdays once a month in the Community Room. Stay tuned!

**Rancho Mirage Writers Festival Book Club**
- The group meets on Wednesdays at 6:30 pm in the Annenberg Reading Room
- For a list of titles, exact dates and more information please email me: susan@ranchomiragelibrary.org

It’s going to be a busy year with lots of events to look forward to at the Library all sponsored by the Rancho Mirage Writers Festival Foundation. The Writers Festival just keeps getting bigger and better! It really does have a celebratory, entertaining and party feel to it. I hope you have a great time!

**Susan Cook**
Principal Librarian
RANCHO MIRAGE WRITERS FESTIVAL
The Royals
Sally Bedell Smith
Wednesday 8:30–9:15 am
John Steinbeck Room

If you loved *The Crown*, you will love hearing Sally Bedell Smith share her stories about the British royal family. Her latest biography, *Prince Charles: The Passions and Paradoxes of an Improbable Life*, as well as her previous books on Queen Elizabeth and Princess Diana, humanize the royal family despite their quirks and eccentricities. Smith gives us entrée to their sometimes strange but always-privileged world with great insight and a polished sensitivity. With Patt Morrison.

Quiet Until the Thaw
Alexandra Fuller
Wednesday 8:30–9:15 am
Jack London Room

The memoirist and journalist Alexandra Fuller had nine novels rejected before she decided to try nonfiction. Her first attempt, a memoir of her unconventional childhood as a white girl in pre-revolutionary Rhodesia, became a best-seller and launched her career. But she never gave up on fiction, and now, after several award-winning memoirs, Fuller has published her first novel. Set on a Lakota Sioux reservation in South Dakota, *Quiet Until the Thaw* tells the story of two cousins who choose different paths to adulthood. Come hear Fuller talk about how her African childhood and new life in the American West informed her story and passion for the Lakota culture. One of her many anecdotes includes participating in a cross-country horseback ride from Nebraska to South Dakota with several hundred Native Americans.

“To be back among people who know Time the way I’d known it as a child was to find myself shocked into a completely unexpected homecoming, if home is where your soul can settle in recognition.”
— Alexandra Fuller
Do you ever wonder what your dog is thinking? Does he really miss you when you’ve gone off to run errands? We finally have some answers, thanks to Dr. Gregory Berns’ groundbreaking research using MRI technology. He will talk about his decades long “Dog Project” and share the fascinating results with us. We know dogs have brains, but through Bern’s creative scientific methods we can begin to find out more about what they are thinking.

Rebecca Mead may have created a new genre where memoir, literary criticism, and biography converge. With brilliance and respectful confidence, Mead builds a beautifully crafted book about the most important reading of her youth—George Eliot’s *Middlemarch*. Mead will be joined by Daisy Lewis to discuss how great books can shape our identities and help us understand our own stories.

“When a reader is grasped and held by a book, reading does not feel like an escape from life so much as it feels like an urgent, crucial dimension of life itself.”

— Rebecca Mead
Greg Iles and Scott Turow in Conversation
Greg Iles and Scott Turow
**Wednesday 9:30–10:15 am**
*John Steinbeck Room*

Let’s see...two of America’s best-selling novelists with over thirty titles to their names and millions of copies sold...what could they possibly have to talk about? Let’s hear what these two smart and prolific writers think about and how they get their stories to move from an idea to a best-selling book.

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The Fall of Saigon and the Aftermath
Viet Thanh Nguyen
**Wednesday 9:30–10:15 am**
*Jack London Room*

Viet Thanh Nguyen’s writings, both fiction and scholarly, have won him numerous distinctions including a MacArthur Genius Award. Nguyen and his family fled to America from South Vietnam when he was four years old. The refugee and immigrant experience is central to Nguyen’s fiction, and he weaves pieces of his own story into his short story collection *The Refugees*. Nguyen’s novel *The Sympathizer* won the Pulitzer Prize for fiction in 2016. Nguyen and Dr. Khoi Le, a noted cardiologist at Eisenhower Medical Center and Vietnamese immigrant, will explore the concepts of “otherness” and “duplicity” from the immigrant perspective and share their experiences of life after the Fall of Saigon.
Food for Thought
Tom Parker Bowles and Elizabeth Sorensen
Wednesday 9:30–10:15 am
Walt Disney Room

According to Virginia Woolf, “One cannot think well, love well, sleep well, if one has not dined well.” The next best thing to eating food is talking about it. Please join Tom Parker Bowles, one of England’s most celebrated food writers; Elizabeth Sorensen, Anglo-American foodie; and chef and restaurateur Tara Lazar, founder of F10 Creative in Palm Springs, for a highly informed look at food.

Hacking Happiness
John C. Havens
Wednesday 9:30–10:15 am
Anne Rice Room

We are all at the very least wary, if not frightened, that our digital identities can be stolen for nefarious purposes. Futurist and author John C. Havens will talk us through how emerging technologies can help us reclaim valuable data for ourselves for positive gain. Havens will take it to the next level by explaining how technology can be utilized to improve the human experience, drive social change, and better our lives to create a happier civilization. With David Bryant.

“[We want] to make sure the lens we look through has been programmed with our ethical perspective ... We need to determine whether we want the self-driving car to swerve to avoid a child in the road even if it risks the lives of our passengers.”
— John C. Havens

Custer and Grant
H.W. Brands and T.J. Stiles
Wednesday 9:30–10:15 am
Joan Didion Room

Two master biographers will compare the lives and historical impact of George Armstrong Custer and President Ulysses S. Grant. With the keen insight and memorable storytelling that have won both authors numerous awards, H.W. Brands and T.J. Stiles will bring their subjects to life as fully developed characters living in a very different America. Custer and Grant are often seen as hard-nosed military men of the nineteenth century living through different eras in a much younger nation where conflict would forge the future. Stiles and Brands will bring great vitality and scholarship to what will be a memorable conversation.
**America Today**  
**Douglas Brinkley, Karl Rove and Bret Stephens**  
**Wednesday 10:30–11:15 am**  
**John Steinbeck Room**

Our country seems more divided than any time since the Civil War. Some argue the election result of November 8, 2016, was the match that set the nation ablaze in a philosophical fire. Others contend that the accumulation of heat from decades of multi-cultural fixations and a harder left than we had seen battling a very angry right was bound to lead to the social tensions that turn our conversations into broken relationships. With Douglas Brinkley, Karl Rove and Bret Stephens, this panel will address the current topics facing America today. Moderated by Susan Eisenhower.

**Adventures in Golf**  
**David Owen**  
**Wednesday 10:30–11:15 am**  
**Jack London Room**

David Owen once thought golf was uncool. Then he tried it out, and his life, and golf writing, have never been the same. In writing about golf, Owen represents the regular guy—not the sublime shot-maker fine-tuning his swing for hours a day, but the hacker out there on weekends having a ball with his buddies as they take mulligans, choose nicknames for each other, and whack away at that little white ball. Join Owen as he regales us with some very funny stories about golf including topics such as playing golf inside the house, the lies golfers tell themselves, the slowest member at his club, and how he has wasted a ton of money on new golf equipment over the years.
Paris 1919: Six Months That Changed the World
Margaret MacMillan
Wednesday 10:30–11:15 am
Walt Disney Room

For a good portion of 1919, after the end of “the war to end all wars,” the Big Three—President Woodrow Wilson, British Prime Minister David Lloyd George, and French Premier Georges Clémenceau—met in Paris to shape a lasting peace. Join historian Margaret MacMillan and David Bryant as they recount those fateful days, which saw new political entities—Iraq, Yugoslavia, and Palestine, among them—born out of the ruins of bankrupt empires.

An American Sickness
Dr. Elisabeth Rosenthal
Wednesday 10:30–11:15 am
Anne Rice Room

The American healthcare system is a battlefield full of empty promises and political reform that seems locked in combat. We can fight back. Dr. Elisabeth Rosenthal, author of An American Sickness, will take us inside the doctor-patient relationship and to hospital rooms, explaining step-by-step the workings of a system badly lacking transparency. Learn what we can do, as individual patients, to navigate the maze that is American healthcare and why we need to demand far-reaching reform.

Barbarian Days
Douglas Brunt and William Finnegan
Wednesday 10:30–11:15 am
Joan Didion Room

In William Finnegan’s memoir of an obsession, surfing only looks like a sport. To insiders on surfboards, it is something completely of its own world: a beautiful addiction, a demanding course of study, a morally dangerous pastime, and a way of life. Join Finnegan and New York Times best-selling novelist Douglas Brunt as they talk about Barbarian Days, Finnegan’s Pulitzer Prize-winning memoir.

“In the fluid world of 1919, it was possible to dream of great change, or have nightmares about the collapse of order.”
— Margaret MacMillan, Paris 1919

“Only in America do medical treatment and recovery coexist with a peculiar national dread: the struggle to figure out from the mounting pile of bills what portion of the fantastical charges you actually must pay.”
— Dr. Elisabeth Rosenthal
The Civil War, Slavery and The Underground Railroad

Jon Meacham and Colson Whitehead

Wednesday 11:30 am–12:15 pm

John Steinbeck Room

Colson Whitehead, Pulitzer Prize-winning novelist, and Jon Meacham, Pulitzer Prize-winning biographer, will talk about our nation’s struggle to save the Union and the role slavery played in the Civil War that ensued. Whitehead immersed himself in the slave narrative based on WPA oral histories from 200 years ago that resulted in his award-winning novel, *The Underground Railroad*.

The 2016 Election

Tim Miller, Amie Parnes, and Richard North Patterson

Wednesday 11:30 am–12:15 pm

Jack London Room

The 58th quadrennial presidential election was held on Tuesday, November 8, 2016. The Republican ticket of businessman Donald Trump and Indiana Governor Mike Pence defeated the Democratic ticket of former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and U.S. Senator from Virginia Tim Kaine. On January 6, 2017, just weeks before the inauguration of the 45th president, the United States government’s intelligence agencies concluded that the Russian government interfered in the election. Tim Miller, Amie Parnes and Richard North Patterson will discuss why the 2016 election will loom large in our country’s history. Moderated by Patt Morrison.

LUNCH

12:15 pm

Join us outside for a delicious boxed lunch of your choice
The Romanovs
Dr. Helen Rappaport
Wednesday 11:30 am–12:15 pm
Walt Disney Room

The brutal murder of the Russian Imperial family on July 17, 1918, has long been a defining moment in world history. One hundred years later we continue to be fascinated with Czar Nicolas II, his English wife Alexandra, their four beautiful and captivating daughters, and the tragic end to the 300 year-old Romanov dynasty. Join historian Dr. Helen Rappaport and Susan Eisenhower as they explore the long history of the Imperial Family and the events leading to that night in 1918.

Who Killed Piet Barol?
Richard Mason
Wednesday 11:30 am–12:15 pm
Anne Rice Room

Richard Mason introduced us to Piet in History of a Pleasure Seeker, his earlier novel about the young Dutchman who escapes the drabness of the provinces to enter the employ of the wealthiest family in Amsterdam. In Mason’s latest novel, Piet, now a furniture maker, is on an adventure in colonial Capetown and the magical forest of Gwadana in search of precious wood. Mason, who was born in South Africa to anti-apartheid activist parents, will talk about his novel, the truth in magic and the enduring consequences of lies. He is joined by Elizabeth Sorensen.

The Wireless Future of Medicine
Dr. Eric Topol
Wednesday 11:30 am–12:15 pm
Joan Didion Room

Could your smart phone be the future of medicine? Dr. Eric Topol is a world renowned cardiologist who has embraced the study of genomics and the latest advances in technology to treat chronic disease. According to Dr. Topol, smart phones will be the instruments that measure and continuously communicate all kinds of vital signs to our doctors, keeping us out of hospital beds and reducing the cost of healthcare.

“I am prescribing a lot more apps than medications these days.”
— Dr. Eric Topol
Bush 41
Jon Meacham
Wednesday 1–1:45 pm
John Steinbeck Room

What are the legacies of George Herbert Walker Bush, 41st President of the United States? Was it his popular foreign policy, the disparity between his campaign promises versus the reality of “no new taxes” or his civility and presidential demeanor? Please join Jon Meacham, Pulitzer Prize-winning biographer, presidential historian and acclaimed author of *Destiny and Power: The American Odyssey of George Herbert Walker Bush*, as he answers that question and others about Bush 41’s legacy.

Fall of Saigon and the Aftermath
Viet Thanh Nguyen
Wednesday 1–1:45 pm
Jack London Room

Viet Thanh Nguyen’s writings, both fiction and scholarly, have won him numerous distinctions including a MacArthur Genius Award. Nguyen and his family fled to America from South Vietnam when he was four years old. The refugee and immigrant experience is central to Nguyen’s fiction, and he weaves pieces of his own story into his short story collection *The Refugees*. Nguyen’s novel *The Sympathizer* won the Pulitzer Prize for fiction in 2016. Nguyen and Dr. Khoi Le, a noted cardiologist at Eisenhower Medical Center and Vietnamese immigrant, will explore the concepts of “otherness” and “duplicity” from the immigrant perspective and share their experiences of life after the Fall of Saigon.
I’m Down
Mishna Wolff
Wednesday 1–1:45 pm
Anne Rice Room

Mishna Wolff grew up in a poor black neighborhood with her single father, a white man who truly believed he was black. “He strutted around with a short perm, gold chains and a Kangol—telling jokes like Redd Fox, and giving advice like Jesse Jackson. You couldn’t tell my father he was white. Believe me, I tried,” writes Wolff. And so from early childhood on, her father began his crusade to make his white daughter down. Wolff’s story is both hysterical and poignant. It will have you howling with laughter, and questioning what it means to be black and white in America.

What If You Had to Spend the Rest of Your Life in a Luxury Hotel?
Amor Towles
Wednesday 1–1:45 pm
Joan Didion Room

In 1922, Count Alexander Rostov is deemed an unrepentant aristocrat by a Bolshevik tribunal, and is sentenced to house arrest in the Metropol, a grand hotel across the street from the Kremlin. Rostov, an indomitable man of erudition and wit, has never worked a day in his life, and must now live in an attic room while some of the most tumultuous decades in Russian history are unfolding outside the hotel’s doors. Join Amor Towles, author of the best-selling novel A Gentleman in Moscow, as he shares his inspiration for Count Rostov’s extraordinary story.

“Fate would not have the reputation it has if it simply did what it seemed it would do.”
— Amor Towles, A Gentleman in Moscow
Dave Barry and Greg Iles in Conversation

Join festival favorite Dave Barry and Greg Iles for a wide-ranging, freewheeling, anything goes conversation between two literary friends (and band mates).

Crime and Punishment

Shaka Senghor and Scott Turow

Wednesday 2–2:45 pm

“We live in a society where we talk about human rights violations, we’re critical about the government and what they’re doing at Guantanamo Bay. But in states around the country, Guantanamo Bay is playing out every day and we’re not doing a damn thing about it.”

— Shaka Senghor on solitary confinement
**Why History Matters**
Nancy Isenberg and T.J. Stiles
**Wednesday 2–2:45 pm**
Walt Disney Room

Historians **Nancy Isenberg** and **T.J. Stiles** will explore how history is a window through which to understand the political universe of today. They will address the differences between journalism and history, and why history offers a more in-depth understanding of current problems in our democratic system, class and racial divisions, and the culture of celebrity.

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**Meet John Adams**
George W. Baker
**Wednesday 2–2:45 pm**
Anne Rice Room

President John Adams, portrayed by **George W. Baker**, will present his views of the nation, history and family life in a humorous and inspiring speech. “John Adams” will also speak about his extraordinary relationship with his wife Abigail and memories of the formation of America. Introduced by David Bryant.

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**More Than the Nation’s Attic**
Richard Kurin
**Wednesday 2–2:45 pm**
Joan Didion Room

The Smithsonian has been called the nation’s attic, but truly no attic could hold such a storehouse of treasures from ancient Chinese bronzes and the Star-Spangled Banner to 3.5-billion-year-old fossils, the Apollo Lunar Module, Dorothy’s ruby slippers and President Lincoln’s hat. The Smithsonian’s vast collection of more than 154 million artifacts is held in its 19 world-class museums, galleries and the National Zoo. But it is not only what the Smithsonian has, but what it does with its collection that is truly amazing: from preserving species and researching the Zika virus to teaching about American history and saving the world’s endangered treasures. In conversation with Geoff Cowan, **Richard Kurin**, Smithsonian Distinguished Scholar and Ambassador-at-Large, will share some of his favorite objects from the collection, as well as talk about the amazing new projects they inspire.

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“Life is divided into three terms—that which was, which is, and which will be. Let us learn from the past to profit by the present, and from the present, to live better in the future.”
— William Wordsworth
Freedom of the Press
Ben Macintyre, Margaret MacMillan and Bret Stephens
Wednesday 3–3:45 pm
John Steinbeck Room

It is hard to imagine a topic more relevant than this one in a year of very public, very loud battles between the current administration and the mainstream media. What are the greatest threats to freedom of the press that exist today? How do we protect this most vital of institutions? Our respected panelists Ben Macintyre, Margaret MacMillan and Bret Stephens will answer these questions and address other issues facing the press in today’s turbulent times. Moderated by Amie Parnes.

“Our liberty depends on the freedom of the press, and that cannot be limited without being lost.”
— Thomas Jefferson

Journey to the Interior
William Finnegan, Alexandra Fuller and Mishna Wolff
Wednesday 3–3:45 pm
Jack London Room

What is a “life” when it’s written down? How does memory inform the present? Why are memoirs so popular? And how does one remember all those events, people and details from so long ago? We are pleased to gather together some of today’s most acclaimed memoirists to answer these and other questions about this significant literary genre. Please join William Finnegan, Alexandra Fuller and Mishna Wolff. Moderated by Rebecca Mead.

“Memoir is the art of inventing the truth.”
— William Zinsser
Where Does the Water Go?
David Owen
Wednesday 3–3:45 pm
Walt Disney Room

Water problems in the western United States can seem tantalizingly easy to solve: just turn off the fountains at the Bellagio, stop selling hay to China, ban golf, cut down the almond trees, and kill all the lawyers. But a closer look reveals a vast man-made ecosystem that is far more complex and interesting than the headlines let on. Patt Morrison and David Owen, author of Where The Water Goes: Life and Death Along the Colorado River, will tackle some of the intricate issues surrounding water.

Is This The End of Men?
Hanna Rosin
Wednesday 3–3:45 pm
Anne Rice Room

Men have been the dominant sex since, well, the dawn of mankind. Hanna Rosin noticed that this long-held truth is, astonishingly, no longer true. Today, by almost every measure, women are no longer gaining on men: many would argue they have pulled decisively ahead. Rosin reveals how our current state of affairs is radically shifting the power dynamics between men and women at every level of society, with profound implications for marriage, sex, children, work, and more.

The Future of ESPN
James Andrew Miller
Wednesday 3–3:45 pm
Joan Didion Room

ESPN began as an outrageous gamble with a lineup that included Australian Rules football, rodeo, and a rinky-dink show called Sports Center. Thirty years later, the empire stretched far beyond television into radio, magazines, mobile phones, restaurants, video games and more, while ESPN’s personalities became global superstars that rivaled the sports icons they covered. Recently ESPN has struggled to adapt to changes in the way viewers consume information resulting in the April 2017 layoff of 100 employees—many of them big name journalists, athletes and analysts. David Davis joins James Andrew Miller in a conversation on the future of ESPN and sports broadcasting.

“They think about sexism in the same way people in London must think about bad weather: It’s an omnipresent and unpleasant fact of life, but it shouldn’t keep you from going about your business.”
— Hanna Rosin, The End of Men
The Best U.S. Presidents
H.W. Brands, Douglas Brinkley and Jon Meacham
Wednesday 4–4:45 pm
John Steinbeck Room

Abraham Lincoln remains America’s best president, if the opinion of presidential historians is anything to go by. In C-SPAN’s latest survey of presidential leadership, which polled 91 presidential historians, Lincoln retained “top billing” as the country’s most esteemed leader. James Buchanan came in last place, beating out William Henry Harrison, who only served for 31 days. Our panel of highly respected presidential historians will weigh in on their favorites. Join H.W. Brands, Douglas Brinkley, Jon Meacham and moderator Geoff Cowan.

Operation Mincemeat
Ben Macintyre
Wednesday 4–4:45 pm
Jack London Room

A corpse, a spy, fake news and an elaborate plan to cover up the 1943 Allied invasion of Sicily. Johan Sorensen and Ben Macintyre will take us through this fantastic and risky plan code named Operation Mincemeat. Macintyre will share recently released MI5 material that involved a cast of characters including Winston Churchill and Ian Fleming, creator of James Bond.

“In love and war, adultery and espionage, deceit can only succeed if the deceived party is willing, in some way, to be deceived.”
— Ben Macintyre, Operation Mincemeat
When in Rome
Adrian Goldsworthy
Wednesday 4–4:45 pm
Walt Disney Room

David Bryant talks with Adrian Goldsworthy about the creation of the Roman Empire, revealing how and why the Romans came to control so much of the world and asking whether the favorable image of the Roman peace is a true one. Goldsworthy’s new book, Pax Romana, is a groundbreaking and comprehensive history of the Roman peace.

The Hello Girls
Elizabeth Cobbs
Wednesday 4–4:45 pm
Anne Rice Room

In 1918, the U.S. Army Signal Corps, at the insistence of General John J. Pershing, sent 223 American women to France because they were masters of the latest technology: the telephone switchboard. Professor Elizabeth Cobbs reveals the challenges these courageous women faced in a war zone and under enemy fire to keep the U.S. army commanders connected with troops on the front lines.

Sleepless Nights
Benjamin Reiss
Wednesday 4–4:45 pm
Joan Didion Room

Why is sleep frustrating for so many people? Why do we spend so much time and money managing and medicating it, and training ourselves and our children to do it correctly? Professor Benjamin Reiss will share some answers in sleep’s hidden history—one that leads to our present, sleep-obsessed society, its tacitly accepted rules, and their troubling consequences. With Patt Morrison.
Out of the Echo Chamber
Bret Stephens
Thursday 8:30–9:15 am
John Steinbeck Room

Please join *New York Times* op-ed columnist, Bret Stephens, as he shares his thoughts about our world today. Many of you who remember his emotional and personal response to President Trump’s executive order banning refugees won’t want to miss Stephens’ perspective on today’s events.

Thriller
Scott Turow
Thursday 8:30–9:15 am
Jack London Room

Scott Turow, author of numerous best-selling novels, has been called the creator of the legal thriller. A practicing lawyer and prolific writer, Turow will talk about where his ideas come from and how he strives to make each new title unique. His latest book, *Testimony*, set at the International Criminal Court in The Hague, is about an American prosecutor who investigates the disappearance of a refugee camp during the Bosnian War. Linda Fairstein joins Turow in what promises to be a thrilling conversation.

“All my novels are about the ambiguities that lie beneath the sharp edges of the law.”
— Scott Turow
“Live from New York, It’s Saturday Night”
James Andrew Miller
Thursday 8:30–9:15 am
Walt Disney Room

Going into their fifth decade of cutting edge satire, SNL continues to hilariously capture the zeitgeist of American culture. Lucie Arnaz and James Andrew Miller will revisit some of the cast of characters from the beloved Gilda Radner to Melissa McCarthy’s spot on Sean Spicer, the former White House Press Secretary. Miller will share some of the unfiltered and uncensored on-camera antics and off-camera escapades from each of SNL’s five decades.

So much of what Saturday Night Live wanted to be, or what I wanted it to be when it began, was cool. Which was something television wasn’t except in a retro way.”
— Lorne Michaels

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Anne Rice Room

Why is sleep frustrating for so many people? Why do we spend so much time and money managing and medicating it, and training ourselves and our children to do it correctly? Professor Benjamin Reiss will share some answers in sleep’s hidden history—one that leads to our present, sleep-obsessed society, its tacitly accepted rules, and their troubling consequences.

“Why do so many of us feel that, despite all our efforts to tame our sleep, it’s fundamentally beyond our control?”
— Benjamin Reiss, Wild Nights

Custer’s Trials: A Life on the Frontier of a New America
T.J. Stiles
Thursday 8:30–9:15 am
Joan Didion Room

Join David Bryant and T.J. Stiles as they talk about the life and adventures of George Armstrong Custer. Stiles’ new biography presents a radically different view of Custer and his turbulent times. Custer and his wife Libbie were figures on the frontier when the United States was moving into the modern era. Their personal struggles reflected the larger struggles of the American people over emancipation, racial equality, the rights of women and much more. In a wide-ranging career, Custer worked to bring about this new America—yet could not adapt to the modernity that he helped to create.
He's Back!
Dave Barry
Thursday 9:30–10:15 am
John Steinbeck Room

Our favorite funnyman is back with all new hilarious stories to share! Dave Barry, now a septuagenarian, will talk about getting old, what he is in the process of doing, as well as other relevant topics, if he can remember what they are.

The Royals
Sally Bedell Smith
Thursday 9:30–10:15 am
Jack London Room

If you loved The Crown, you will love hearing Sally Bedell Smith share her stories about the British royal family. Her latest biography, Prince Charles: The Passions and Paradoxes of an Improbable Life, as well as her previous books on Queen Elizabeth and Princess Diana humanize the royal family despite their quirks and eccentricities. Smith gives us entrée to their sometimes strange but always-privileged world with great insight and a polished sensitivity. With Van Gordon Sauter.

“Much about Prince Charles was poorly understood, not least the extent of his originality.”
— Sally Bedell Smith, Prince Charles
The Healthcare Solution
Dr. Elisabeth Rosenthal
Thursday 9:30–10:15 am
Walt Disney Room

Our healthcare system leaves many of us frustrated, but there is a solution. Dr. Elisabeth Rosenthal, author of *An American Sickness*, will take us inside the doctor-patient relationship and to hospital rooms, explaining step-by-step the workings of a system badly lacking transparency. Dr. Khoi Le will join Dr. Rosenthal to talk about what we can do, as individual patients, to navigate the maze that is American healthcare and why we need to demand far-reaching reform.

History of a Pleasure Seeker
Richard Mason
Thursday 9:30–10:15 am
Anne Rice Room

English writer Richard Mason's novel, *History of a Pleasure Seeker*, has been described as “...*Downton Abbey*, in Amsterdam, with lots of sex, and not always between the usual suspects.” So who better to talk with Mason about what goes on behind closed doors of stately mansions than Daisy Lewis, familiar to *Downton Abbey* fans as Sarah Bunting. Join them in conversation as they take the lid off a privileged family life and show how sex, while not necessarily the same thing as love, can be a potent force for good.

Barbarian Days
William Finnegan
Thursday 9:30–10:15 am
Joan Didion Room

In William Finnegan’s memoir of an obsession, surfing only looks like a sport. To insiders on surfboards, it is something completely of its own world: a beautiful addiction, a demanding course of study, a morally dangerous pastime, and a way of life. Join Finnegan and David Davis as they talk about the surfing life, its heroes and its champions.

“When you surf, as I then understood it, you live and breathe waves. You always know what the surf is doing. You cut school, lose jobs, lose girlfriends, if it’s good.”
— William Finnegan, *Barbarian Days*
Transformational Tuesdays: Elections That Shaped Our History
H.W. Brands, Douglas Brinkley and Karl Rove
Thursday 10:30–11:15 am
John Steinbeck Room

The outcome of the 2016 Clinton/Trump election was remarkable, but how will it hold up to history? Can any President shape a country like Lincoln? Save the United States like F.D.R.? Join H.W. Brands, Douglas Brinkley and Karl Rove as they share their thoughts on which winners left an indelible legacy and changed America, for better or for worse. Moderated by Susan Eisenhower.

The Wireless Future of Medicine
Dr. Eric Topol
Thursday 10:30–11:15 am
Jack London Room

Could your smart phone be the future of medicine? Dr. Eric Topol is a world renowned cardiologist who has embraced the study of genomics and the latest advances in technology to treat chronic disease. According to Dr. Topol, smart phones will be the instruments that measure and continuously communicate all kinds of vital signs to our doctors, keeping us out of hospital beds and reducing the cost of healthcare.

“Where today people surf the web and check their e-mail on their cell phones, tomorrow they will be checking their vital signs.”
— Dr. Eric Topol
The Underground Railroad
Colson Whitehead
Thursday 10:30–11:15 am
Walt Disney Room

Colson Whitehead has established himself as one of the most versatile and innovative writers in contemporary literature. From the secret lives of elevators to international poker tournaments, Whitehead takes on the marginal, the strange, and the surreal. His award-winning novel, *The Underground Railroad*, is a magnificent tour de force that chronicles a young slave’s journey during a desperate bid for freedom in the antebellum South. Whitehead will share how he came to write his powerful new novel that has been described as a shattering meditation on the United States’ complicated political and racial history.

Foxiest Founding Father
Elizabeth Cobbs
Thursday 10:30–11:15 am
Anne Rice Room

Hamilfans rejoice! Here is an opportunity to get to meet Elizabeth Cobbs, historian and author of the deliciously dishy historical novel, *The Hamilton Affair*. Set against the dramatic backdrop of the American Revolution, it features a cast of legendary characters. *The Hamilton Affair* tells the sweeping and tumultuous true story of Alexander Hamilton and Elizabeth Schuyler, from its passionate beginnings to our nation's first sex scandal. Their story ends famously with Hamilton’s duel with Aaron Burr on the banks of the Hudson River. With Patt Morrrison.

The End of Men
Rebecca Mead and Hanna Rosin
Thursday 10:30–11:15 am
Joan Didion Room

Men have been the dominant sex since, well, the dawn of mankind. But Hanna Rosin noticed that this long-held truth is, astonishingly, no longer true. Today, by almost every measure, women are no longer gaining on men: many would argue they have pulled decisively ahead. Rosin reveals how our current state of affairs is radically shifting the power dynamics between men and women at every level of society, with profound implications for marriage, sex, children, work, and more. With Rebecca Mead.

“On one end there was who you were before you went underground, and on the other end a new person steps out into the light.”
— Colson Whitehead, *The Underground Railroad*
America Today
Honorable Barbara Boxer, Honorable Gray Davis, Jon Meacham and Tim Miller

Thursday 11:30 am–12:15 pm
John Steinbeck Room

No small topic and no small nation, we seem to be in the midst of a philosophical civil war with a remarkably uncivil tone to it all. Our panelists Honorable Barbara Boxer, Honorable Gray Davis, Jon Meacham and Tim Miller and moderator Geoff Cowan, will bring experience, intelligence, and carefully delivered analysis to the overarching battle of ideas that frames America today.

LUNCH
12:15 pm
Join us outside for a delicious boxed lunch of your choice

The Murder of the Romanovs in Ekaterinberg, July 1918
Dr. Helen Rappaport

Thursday 11:30 am–12:15 pm
Jack London Room

The brutal murder of the Russian Imperial family on July 17, 1918, has long been a defining moment in world history. One hundred years later we continue to be fascinated with Czar Nicolas and his family: his English wife Alexandra, their four beautiful and captivating daughters, and the tragic end to the 300 year-old Romanov dynasty. Join historian Dr. Helen Rappaport as she discusses the long history of the Imperial Family and the events leading to that night in 1918.
The White House is the People’s House
Douglas Brinkley and Stewart McLaurin
Thursday 11:30 am–12:15 pm
Walt Disney Room

Please join historian Douglas Brinkley and President of the White House Historical Association, Stewart McLaurin, as they talk about the rich history of America’s Executive Mansion and share stories of its illustrious inhabitants, fabled art collection and revered traditions.

A Sporting Life
Douglas Brunt
Thursday 11:30 am–12:15 pm
Anne Rice Room

Today’s children are pushed to achieve excellence but at what cost? Douglas Brunt’s novel, Trophy Son, tells the story of a tennis prodigy, from childhood to the finals of tournaments around the world. Elizabeth Sorensen will join the author as they discuss parental ambitions and the dangers of putting extraordinary pressure on young people to achieve fame and fortune.

Rogue Heroes
Ben Macintyre
Thursday 11:30 am–12:15 pm
Joan Didion Room

Britain’s Special Air Service or SAS was the brainchild of Colonel David Stirling. This young, gadabout aristocrat displayed an aimlessness in early life that belied a remarkably strategic mind. Stirling envisioned a small group of elite, well-trained men who could wreak havoc behind enemy lines. The SAS’ remarkable exploits during WWII became the model for many of today’s Special Forces units. Johan Sorensen joins Ben Macintyre as he shares his unprecedented access to SAS archives to shine a light inside a legendary unit long shrouded in secrecy.

Colonel David Stirling with a patrol of Special Air Service (SAS) men
Crime Does Pay
Greg Iles, Richard North Patterson and Scott Turow
Thursday 1–1:45 pm
John Steinbeck Room

That is, crime writing does pay. With Greg Iles, Richard North Patterson and Scott Turow. Moderated by Linda Fairstein. Together, these best-selling writers have published 68 books of which 38 were best-sellers and 8 were made into movies proving that crime (writing) does pay. In this conversation the authors will have the opportunity to talk about their craft, legal backgrounds and roles as investigative journalists.

MacArthur vs. Truman: The Showdown That Changed America
H.W. Brands
Thursday 1–1:45 pm
Jack London Room

Harry Truman’s decision to fire Douglas MacArthur at the height of the Korean War in April 1951 shocked the American political system and astonished the world. Much of the world didn’t realize the president had the power to fire a five-star general, an act that changed the perceived balance of power still in effect. Historian H.W. Brands and Susan Eisenhower will discuss this turbulent relationship between the President and the General and its enduring impact on military, diplomatic, and political history.

Harrison Ford in Presumed Innocent, based on the book by Scott Turow
President Harry S. Truman and General Douglas MacArthur
Marriage, Motherhood and Micro-dosing
Ayelet Waldman
Thursday 1–1:45 pm
Walt Disney Room

You won’t want to miss Lucie Arnaz and Ayelet Waldman talking about marriage, motherhood and micro-dosing LSD. Waldman is the author of A Really Good Day, an account of her month-long adventure micro-dosing LSD to combat her bi-polar disorder and be a “less difficult” person to herself and her family. Fifty years after The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test and Timothy Leary’s mantra of turn on, tune in, drop out: this conversation will introduce us to the brave new world of LSD.

White Trash
Nancy Isenberg and Benjamin Reiss
Thursday 1–1:45 pm
Joan Didion Room

In her best-selling history of the class system in America, historian Nancy Isenberg upends history as we know it by taking on our comforting myths about equality and uncovering the crucial legacy of the ever-present, always embarrassing—if occasionally entertaining—poor white trash. Benjamin Reiss, fellow historian and author will join Isenberg in a conversation on the untold history of class in America.

“Our culture prides itself on variety and choice … at least for those who can afford to choose.”
— Benjamin Reiss

“How does a culture that prizes equality of opportunity explain, or indeed accommodate, its persistently marginalized people?”
— Nancy Isenberg
History’s People
Douglas Brinkley, Margaret MacMillan and Jon Meacham

Thursday 2–2:45 pm
John Steinbeck Room

We ask our esteemed panelists one question: Who is your favorite historical figure? Historians Douglas Brinkley, Margaret MacMillan and Jon Meacham will share their personal selection, some famous and some little-known, who stand out for them and why. Some have changed the course of history while others are memorable for less obvious reasons. Moderated by Geoff Cowan.

For Better or For Worse
Alexandra Fuller, Hanna Rosin and Ayelet Waldman
Thursday 2–2:45 pm
Jack London Room

These writers have all written honestly, factually and infamously about marriage, for better or for worse. Please welcome Alexandra Fuller, author of Leaving Before the Rains Come, Hanna Rosin, author of The End of Men: And the Rise of Women, and Ayelet Waldman, author of A Really Good Day. Their conversation will be moderated and joined by Lucie Arnaz.

“History matters and we must do it well. When it is false or one-sided it can be used to mobilize people for evil ends. At its best history can explain others and help us to better understand ourselves and our world.”
— Margaret MacMillan

“You see, Francois, marriage is a beautiful mistake which two people make together.”
— Kay Francis, in Trouble in Paradise (1932)
What it's Like to Be a Dog (Or a Dolphin)
Dr. Gregory Berns
Thursday 2–2:45 pm
Walt Disney Room

Dr. Gregory Berns’ groundbreaking research uses MRI technology to better understand how dogs think. The neuroscientist’s hope is that if he can understand how dogs process things, he may be able to identify which dogs would be best suited for different services, such as cancer sniffing dogs, seeing eye dogs, and military or police dogs. Dr. Berns’ work fundamentally reshapes how we think about—and treat—man’s best friend.

“Heartificial Intelligence
John C. Havens
Thursday 2–2:45 pm
Anne Rice Room

We are all wedded to our technology whether it is our wearable devices, smart phones or self-parking cars. But our relationship with technology and specifically AI is fraught with anxiety as exemplified by the villainous computer HAL in the film 2001: A Space Odyssey. John C. Havens and Johan Sorensen will discuss how to plan for our future with machines and ways to bring humanity back to technology.

Powerhouse
James Andrew Miller
Thursday 2–2:45 pm
Joan Didion Room

In 1975, five young employees of a sclerotic William Morris Agency left to start their own, strikingly innovative talent agency. In the years to come, Creative Artists Agency would become the largest, most imperial, groundbreaking, and star-studded agency Hollywood has ever seen—a company whose tentacles spread throughout the world of movies, music, television, technology, advertising, sports, and investment banking. Join author James Andrew Miller, Sharon Hall and Todd Kessler as they discuss this powerhouse.

“Proof of social cognition means that dogs aren’t just Pavlovian learning machines. It means that dogs are sentient beings, and this has startling consequences for the dog-human relationship.”
— Dr. Gregory Berns, How Dogs Love Us
Dave Barry and Scott Turow in Conversation

Dave Barry and Scott Turow

**Thursday 3–3:45 pm**

*John Steinbeck Room*

Join [Dave Barry](https://www.davebarry.com/) and [Scott Turow](https://www.scottturow.com/) for a wide-ranging, free-wheeling, anything goes conversation between two literary friends (and band-mates). Fun fact: Dave helped officiate Scott’s 2016 wedding to Adriane Glazier. Specifically, Dave lead the couple in the smashing of a glass and other Jewish traditions.

“We operate under a jury system in this country, and as much as we complain about it, we have to admit that we know of no better system, except possibly flipping a coin.”

— Dave Barry

**Literary Voices**

Danzy Senna and Colson Whitehead

**Thursday 3–3:45 pm**

*Jack London Room*

Join two of America’s most celebrated novelists [Danzy Senna](https://www.danzysenna.com/) and [Colson Whitehead](https://www.colsonwhitehead.com/) for a conversation. They will discuss their writing lives as well as the inspiration for and development of their characters and narratives. While each has their own very distinct voice, they share the joys and challenges unique to a writer’s life.

“Race was not only a construct but a scientific error along the magnitude of the error that the world was flat.”

— Danzy Senna, *Caucasia*

“Truth was a changing display in a shop window, manipulated by hands when you weren’t looking, alluring and ever out of reach.”

— Colson Whitehead, *The Underground Railroad*
Comfort Food
Tom Parker Bowles
Thursday 3–3:45 pm
Walt Disney Room

Britain is experiencing something of a food renaissance and some have even called it a revolution. Typically known for its comfort food—heartwarming, filling and satisfying—the direction is now towards a cuisine that reflects its diverse ethnic population. Quintessential Brit, food critic and author, Tom Parker Bowles will share some of his most memorable dishes growing up at home in Wiltshire, then at boarding school at Eton and Oxford. Fellow compatriot Daisy Lewis joins Parker Bowles for this very personal look at classic British food.

Where Does the Water Go?
David Owen
Thursday 3–3:45 pm
Anne Rice Room

Water problems in the western United States can seem tantalizingly easy to solve: just turn off the fountains at the Bellagio, stop selling hay to China, ban golf, cut down the almond trees, and kill all the lawyers. But a closer look reveals a vast man-made ecosystem that is far more complex and interesting than the headlines have time or patience to reveal. David Owen, author of Where the Water Goes: Life and Death Along the Colorado River, will untangle some of the intricate issues surrounding water.

The National Museum of African American History and Culture
Richard Kurin
Thursday 3–3:45 pm
Joan Didion Room

The National Museum of African American History and Culture provides a unique lens on the major events of American history and the principles that guide the nation—freedom, liberty, democracy, civil rights, the pursuit of happiness. Sitting adjacent to the Washington Monument, the museum was established after a century of efforts to represent in the nation’s capital the role of African Americans have played in our shared history. The museum was built through a public-private partnership and raised almost $400 million for construction, collections, exhibitions, programs, and an opening celebration. In conversation with Linda Johnson Rice, Richard Kurin, Smithsonian Distinguished Scholar and Ambassador-at-Large, will talk about this long-awaited addition to the Smithsonian and why the museum is so vital to the American story.
The Candidate
Susan Eisenhower, Tim Miller and Karl Rove
Thursday 4–4:45 pm
John Steinbeck Room

We will always remember 2016 as an election year built on surprises. This panel discussion promises to be full of inside the Beltway knowledge yielding a conversation full of experience and a probing look at the volatile voting landscape of a deeply divided country. Susan Eisenhower is a consultant with a resume in many policymaking areas. Tim Miller, as the former spokesman for Jeb Bush, lives in a world of campaign research and finely honed communication. Karl Rove brings data analysis and great skill in marketing a candidate. Moderated by Van Gordon Sauter.

A Gentleman in Moscow
Amor Towles
Thursday 4–4:45 pm
Jack London Room

In 1922, Count Alexander Rostov is deemed an unrepentant aristocrat by a Bolshevik tribunal, and is sentenced to house arrest in the Metropol, a grand hotel across the street from the Kremlin. Rostov, an indomitable man of erudition and wit, has never worked a day in his life, and must now live in an attic room while some of the most tumultuous decades in Russian history are unfolding outside the hotel’s doors. Find out what becomes of Count Rostov from best-selling novelist Amor Towles and his beguiling inquisitor, Daisy Lewis.
Shaka Senghor, former inmate and author of *Writing My Wrongs*, is a passionate advocate of prison reform. Senghor was convicted of second-degree murder at nineteen. He then served nineteen years in the Michigan Department of Corrections, seven of them in solitary confinement. He knows, first hand, the myriad issues facing our country’s mass incarceration problem and the failure of rehabilitation through solitary confinement. Elizabeth Sorensen will join him in conversation.

Alexandra Cooper is a Manhattan Assistant District Attorney for the Sex Crimes Unit. *Linda Fairstein’s* latest novel is #19 in the series, which melds storytelling at its best with Fairstein’s experiences as an Assistant District Attorney of the County of New York. Expect an engaging talk by a writer who puts heavy doses of grim reality in each of her expertly detailed books. With Richard North Patterson.

Amie Parnes, Senior White House Correspondent at *The Hill* in Washington and co-author of the #1 *New York Times* best-seller *Shattered*, will share the latest news from her beat inside the Beltway. Parnes will also bring us up to date on the latest HRC news. With Patt Morrison.

“I’m asking you to envision a world where men and women aren’t held hostage to their past.”
— Shaka Senghor
Reflected Glory
Sally Bedell Smith
Friday 8:30–9:15 am
John Steinbeck Room

Join biographer Sally Bedell Smith as she recounts the explosive true story of the woman behind the public facade. From her early years as a British debutante to her last days as the U.S. Ambassador to France, Pamela Digby Churchill Hayward Harriman dealt with more powerful figures than anyone else in the twentieth century. In the process, she achieved her own fame in their reflected glory.

“I would rather have bad things written about me than be forgotten.”
— Pamela Harriman

When in Rome
Adrian Goldsworthy
Friday 8:30–9:15 am
Jack London Room

Historian and novelist Adrian Goldsworthy will discuss the creation of the Roman Empire, revealing how and why the Romans came to control so much of the world and asking whether the favorable image of the Roman Peace is a true one. Goldsworthy’s new book, *Pax Romana*, is a groundbreaking and comprehensive history of the Roman Peace.

“Personal hatreds and rivalry loomed larger in most senator’s minds than the good of the Republic. [A big problem then and now].”
— Adrian Goldsworthy,
*Augustus: First Emperor of Rome*

Preserving the People’s House
Stewart McLaurin
Friday 8:30–9:15 am
Walt Disney Room

The White House Historical Association (WHHA) was founded in 1961 through the efforts of First Lady Jacqueline Kennedy for the purpose of enhancing the understanding, appreciation, and enjoyment of the “Executive Mansion.” Stewart McLaurin, President of the WHHA, offers an insider’s view of the White House, the official home and workplace of the President of the United States.
Spy vs. Spy
Ben McIntyre, Jason Matthews and Suzanne Matthews
Friday 9:30–10:15 am
John Steinbeck Room

Ben McIntyre, journalist and author, and Suzanne and Jason Matthews, former CIA operatives, will discuss some famous spies and covert operations. Kim Philby was considered the greatest spy in history. He was a brilliant and charming man who rose to head Britain’s counterintelligence against the Soviet Union during the height of the Cold War—while he was secretly working for the enemy. The Double Cross System, which specialized in turning German spies into double agents, was the most sophisticated and successful deception operation ever carried out, ensuring Allied victory at the most pivotal point in the WWII.

Two’s Company
Suzanne Somers
Friday 9:30–10:15 am
Jack London Room

Suzanne Somers will share how to shape a healthy, lasting relationship through the lens of her fifty-year love affair with her husband, Alan Hamel. She will expose the inner workings of her marriage: a winning combination of love, business, and family. Through fame, fortune, sickness and blended families, Suzanne and Alan have kept the vitality of their marriage alive—every day. They have not spent a night apart in 37 years. They combine business savvy in their constantly evolving relationship. Suzanne reveals hard-won advice on how you can rely on another person without sacrificing your individual strengths.

A Magnificent Obsession: Victoria, Albert, and the Death That Changed the British Monarchy
Dr. Helen Rappaport
Friday 9:30–10:15 am
Walt Disney Room

After the untimely death of Prince Albert at the age of 42, Queen Victoria and her nation were plunged into a state of grief so profound that this one event would dramatically alter the shape of the British monarchy. Historian and author Dr. Helen Rappaport offers a new perspective on the crucial final months of the Prince’s life and the first long, dark ten years of the Queen’s retreat from public view.
Leading Lady
Sherry Lansing
Friday 10:30–11:15 am
John Steinbeck Room

When Sherry Lansing became the first woman ever to be named president of a major studio, the news ricocheted around the world. That was just the beginning of an astonishing run that saw her head two studios, make hundreds of films and rule for twenty-five years as the most powerful woman Hollywood has ever known. Lansing will share behind-the-scenes tales from movie sets and Hollywood boardrooms, and explain what inspired her to walk away from it all to start the Sherry Lansing Foundation. Peter Bart will join Sherry to talk about her extraordinary life and new book Leading Lady.

Saving Cultural Heritage Today
Richard Kurin
Friday 10:30–11:15 am
Jack London Room

Unknown to most people, the Smithsonian leads today’s “monuments men and women” to save cultural heritage threatened by natural disasters, war and terrorism around the world. Richard Kurin, who oversees the Smithsonian’s Cultural Rescue Initiative, outlines the institution’s efforts to save cultural heritage in Haiti, after the 2010 earthquake, Syria and Iraq, following the rise of ISIS, and in Egypt, Mali, Nepal and Puerto Rico. Kurin will explore the challenges of working in harsh and dangerous circumstances and how researchers, curators and law enforcement are working together to prevent illegal looting and trafficking and restore the treasures threatened by war and natural disasters.

History and Biography
Margaret MacMillan and Sally Bedell Smith
Friday 10:30–11:15 am
Walt Disney Room

Join historian Margaret MacMillan and biographer Sally Bedell Smith in a conversation focusing on learning history through biography. MacMillan is a Canadian historian and professor at The University of Toronto. She is the author of seven books including History’s People, The War That Ended Peace and Women of the Raj. Smith is the acclaimed author of seven books ranging from Britain’s royal family to the Kennedy White House. We know these intellectuals will have a dazzling discussion that will leave us wanting the 2019 Writers Festival to get here soon.

“No great man lives in vain. The history of the world is but the biography of great men.”
— Thomas Carlyle
Dave Barry is the author of numerous books and a nationally syndicated humor column for the Miami Herald from 1983 to 2005. Barry won the Pulitzer Prize for Commentary in 1988. This will be his fourth appearance at the RMWF thanks to the generous support of Jan Salta.

Wednesday 2–2:45 pm • Thursday 9:30–10:15 am
Thursday 3–3:45 pm

Dr. Gregory Berns is the Distinguished Professor of Neuroeconomics at Emory University, where he directs the Center for Neuroeconomics and Facility for Education & Research in Neuroscience. Dr. Berns is the author of numerous books on neuroscience including How Dogs Love Us and What It’s Like to be a Dog based on his groundbreaking research using fMRI to decode what dogs really think.

Wednesday 8:30–9:15 am • Thursday 2–2:45 pm

H.W. Brands is a master storyteller and New York Times best-selling historian. He is the author of 25 books on U.S. history and biography. He is professor of history and government at the University of Texas at Austin, where he earned his Ph.D. in history in 1985. His works have twice been selected as finalists for the Pulitzer Prize. This is his third appearance at the RMWF.

Wednesday 9:30–10:15 am • Wednesday 1–1:45 pm
Wednesday 4–4:45 pm • Thursday 10:30–11:15 am
Thursday 1–1:45 pm

Douglas Brinkley is an award-winning historian and best-selling author. Brinkley is currently a professor of history at Rice University, a CNN Presidential Historian and a New York Times best-selling author. The Chicago Tribune has dubbed him “America’s new past master.” In addition, he is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations and The Century Club.

Wednesday 10:30–11:15 • Wednesday 4–4:45 pm
Thursday 10:30–11:15 am
Thursday 4–4:45 pm

William Finnegan is a journalist and Pulitzer Prize-winning author. His books include Cold New World, A Complicated War, Dateline Soweto, Crossing the Line, and Barbarian Days. He has twice been a National Magazine Award finalist and has won numerous journalism awards, including two Overseas Press Club awards since 2009. Barbarian Days: A Surfing Life received the 2016 Pulitzer Prize for Autobiography. Finnegan has been staff writer at The New Yorker since 1987.

Wednesday 10:30–11:15 am • Wednesday 3–3:45 pm
Thursday 9:30–10:15 am

Douglas Brunt was President and CEO of Authentium, Inc., an Internet security company. He now writes full time and has published three New York Times best-selling novels: Ghosts of Manhattan, The Means and Trophy Son. A Philadelphia native, he lives in New York City with his wife Megyn Kelly and their three children.

Wednesday 10:30–11:15 am • Thursday 11:30 am–12:15 pm

Elizabeth Cobbs holds the Melbern Glasscock Chair in American History at Texas A&M University and is a research fellow at Stanford’s Hoover Institution. She is an historian, commentator, and author of seven books including two novels, a textbook, and three non-fiction works. Cobbs is the author of American Umpire, which was made into a film of the same name and The Hamilton Affair.

Wednesday 1:45 pm • Wednesday 4–4:45 pm
Thursday 10:30–11:15 am

Linda Fairstein, America’s foremost legal expert on crimes of sexual assault and domestic violence, led the Sex Crimes Unit of the District Attorney’s Office in Manhattan for twenty-five years. A Fellow of the American College of Trial Lawyers, she is a graduate of Vassar College and the University of Virginia School of Law. Her first novel, Final Jeopardy, introduced the critically acclaimed character of Alexandra Cooper, a Manhattan Assistant District Attorney for the Sex Crimes Unit. Deadfall is Fairstein’s nineteenth novel in the series.

Thursday 8:30–9:15 am • Thursday 1–1:45 pm
Thursday 4–4:45 pm

Dave Barry

Dr. Gregory Berns

H.W. Brands

Douglas Brinkley

William Finnegan
Alexandra Fuller was born in England and at three years old moved with her family to a farm in Rhodesia. After that country’s civil war in 1981, the Fullers moved first to Malawi, then to Zambia. Fuller has written widely about her childhood in war torn Africa and her deeply eccentric family with grace and humor. She has written for *The New Yorker* and *Vogue* and is a frequent contributor to *National Geographic Magazine*. Her first novel, *Quiet Until the Thaw*, was published in 2017 to wide acclaim. Alexandra currently lives in Wyoming in a yurt.

**Wednesday 8:30–9:15 am • Wednesday 3–3:45 pm**

**Thursday 2–2:45 pm**

Dr. Adrian Goldsworthy is a British historian and author specializing in ancient Roman history. He has written eleven books on Roman history as well as numerous works of historical fiction based on the Napoleonic Wars. In addition to his full-time writing, Goldsworthy is currently a Visiting Fellow in the archaeology department at Newcastle University.

**Wednesday 4–4:45 pm • Friday 8:30–9:15 am**

John C. Havens is Founder of The H(app)athon Project, a nonprofit organization, “Connecting Happiness to Action” by creating sensor-based smartphone surveys utilizing economic indicators to increase civic engagement and wellbeing. Haven’s current work is focusing on how emerging media intersects with the science of wellbeing. He is a professional speaker and contributing writer for *Mashable*, *The Guardian*, and *The Huffington Post*.

**Wednesday 9:30–10:15 am • Thursday 2–2:45 pm**

Greg Iles was born in Germany in 1960, where his father ran the US Embassy Medical Clinic during the height of the Cold War. He spent his youth in Natchez, Mississippi, and is a graduate of the University of Mississippi. In 2011, Iles was in a car accident in which he was almost killed. He lost part of his right leg and sustained other severe injuries. It was during his convalescence that Iles wrote the Penn Cage trilogy. He has sold more than 10 million books over the past 20 years and had 13 *New York Times* best-sellers including his latest book *Mississippi Burning*.

**Wednesday 9:30–10:15 am • Wednesday 2–2:45 pm**

**Thursday 1–1:45 pm**

**Dr. Richard Kurin** is the Smithsonian Distinguished Scholar and Ambassador-at-Large, the first person so designated in the 171-year history of the Smithsonian Institution. As a member of the Smithsonian’s senior leadership team, Kurin focuses on strategic direction, institutional partnerships, public representation, philanthropic support and special initiatives. He is the author of *Hope Diamond: The Legendary History of a Cursed Gem; Reflections of a Cultural Broker: A View from the Smithsonian; Madcap May: Mistress of Myth, Men, and Hope; Smithsonian Folklife Festival: Culture of, by, and for the People* and scores of scholarly articles. His latest book is *The Smithsonian’s History of America in 101 Objects*.

**Wednesday 2–2:45 pm • Thursday 3–3:45 pm**

**Friday 10:30–11:15 am**

Sherry Lansing has spent almost 30 years in the motion picture business, involved in the production, marketing, and distribution of more than 200 films, including Academy Award winners *Forrest Gump*, *Braveheart*, and *Titanic*. Throughout her film career, Lansing earned a reputation as a trailblazer, a visionary leader, and a creative filmmaker. In 1980, she became the first woman to head a major film studio when she was appointed President of 20th Century Fox. In 1992, she was named Chairman and CEO of Paramount Pictures and began an unprecedented tenure that lasted more than 12 years. The Sherry Lansing Foundation, a nonprofit organization dedicated to cancer research, health, public education, and encore career opportunities, was formed in 2005.

**Friday 10:30–11:15 am**

Ben Macintyre is an international best-selling author, historian, and an Associate Editor for *The Times*, a British daily paper. He has worked as the newspaper’s correspondent in New York, Paris and Washington. Macintyre is the author of nine books including *Agent Zigzag*, shortlisted for the Costa Biography Award and the Galaxy British Book Award for Biography of the Year 2008, and the number 1 best-sellers *A Spy Among Friends, Operation Mincemeat and Double Cross*.

**Wednesday 3–3:45 pm • Wednesday 4–4:45 pm**

**Thursday 11:30 am–12:15 pm • Friday 9:30–10:15 am**
Margaret MacMillan is an historian and Professor of History at the University of Toronto and the former Warden of St. Antony’s College at Oxford University. A leading expert on history and international relations, MacMillan is a frequent commentator in the media. Dr. MacMillan is the author of six books including 1919: Six Months that Changed the World for which she was the first woman to win the Samuel Johnson Prize. She is a great-granddaughter of former British Prime Minister David Lloyd George.

Wednesday 10:30–11:15 am • Wednesday 3–3:45 pm
Thursday 2–2:45 pm • Friday 10:30–11:15 am

Richard Mason is an author, entrepreneur and philanthropist. Mason was just 21 when his first novel The Drowning People was published to great acclaim. It sold more than a million copies in 28 languages and won Italy’s Cavour Prize for Best First Novel. After his second novel Us, he began a collection of interconnected works that now include The Lighted Rooms, History of a Pleasure Seeker and Who Killed Piet Barol? The proceeds from his first novel were used to establish the Kay Mason Foundation, which provides scholarships to disadvantaged children in South Africa.

Wednesday 11:30 am–12:15 pm • Thursday 9:30–10:15 am

Stewart McLaurin is the president of The White House Historical Association. McLaurin’s career spans the non-profit, education, and public policy fields. Over the past 30 years, he has held senior positions with George Washington’s Mount Vernon, The Ronald Reagan Presidential Foundation, the Motion Picture Association, Georgetown University, American Red Cross, and the Federal Government.

Thursday 11:30 am–12:15 pm • Friday 8:30–9:15 am


Wednesday 11:30 am–12:15 pm • Wednesday 1–1:45 pm
Wednesday 4–4:45 pm • Thursday 11:30 am–12:15 pm
Thursday 2–2:45 pm

Rebecca Mead is a staff writer for The New Yorker and the author of the critically acclaimed My Life in Middlemarch and One Perfect Day: The Selling of the American Wedding. Since joining The New Yorker in 1997 she has written about legalized prostitution, the infertility industry’s trade in human eggs, the spring break business, and God-based diet programs, among many other subjects. Mead has written more than a hundred Talk of the Town stories, and has interviewed everyone from goat herders in Mongolia to members of the fashion-obsessed social elite of Sao Paulo, and from Slavoj Zizek to Shaquille O’Neal.

Wednesday 8:30–9:15 am • Wednesday 3–3:45 pm
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Wednesday 8:30–9:15 am • Wednesday 3–3:45 pm
Thursday 10:30–11:15 am

James Andrew Miller is an award-winning journalist and author who has worked in politics, media, and entertainment in a career spanning more than 20 years. Miller was previously the Special Assistant and Chief Speechwriter to Senate Majority Leader Howard Baker. He went on to work both in show business and the news business. He is a frequent contributor to The New York Times Sunday Magazine, Vanity Fair, Granland, The Hollywood Reporter, Newsweek, The Daily Beast, Salon and The Harvard Journal on Legislation and is the author of four best-selling books.

Wednesday 3–3:45 pm • Thursday 8:30–9:15 am
Thursday 2–2:45 pm

Tim Miller is a communications consultant with the strategy firm Definers Public Affairs. Miller is considered to be among the most digitally fluent and social-media savvy operatives in the business. He has been active in numerous Republican-based super PACs including America Rising, Jeb Bush’s Right to Rise and the anti-Trump Our Principles.

Wednesday 11:30 am–12:15 pm
Thursday 11:30 am–12:15 pm • Thursday 4–4:45 pm

Viet Thanh Nguyen is a Pulitzer Prize-winning novelist and winner of the 2017 MacArthur fellowship (“genius grant”). He was born in Ban Me Thuot, Vietnam and came to the United States as a refugee after the Fall of Saigon in 1975. He graduated from the University of California, Berkeley with an MA in English and Ethnic Studies and then a PhD in English. Nguyen’s debut novel, The Sympathizer, won the 2016 Pulitzer Prize for Fiction. He currently teaches at USC and serves as cultural critic-at-large for The Los Angeles Times and is an editor of diaCRITICS, a blog for the Diasporic Vietnamese Artists Network.

Wednesday 9:30–10:15 am • Wednesday 1–1:45 pm
Richard North Patterson is a writer, lawyer and political commentator. He has written 22 novels, many of which were best-sellers. Known for his thorough research, his topics ranged from gun violence to abortion to Al Qaeda plots to steal a nuclear bomb. In 2015, Patterson retired from fiction writing and began devoting his time to political commentary. During the 2016 presidential campaign, Patterson was a contributing opinion writer for The Huffington Post. His book about that campaign, Fever Swamp, was published in January 2017.

Wednesday 11:30 am-12:15 pm • Thursday 1-1:45 pm
Thursday 4-4:45 pm

David Owen has been a staff writer for The New Yorker since 1991. Before joining The New Yorker, he was a contributing editor at The Atlantic Monthly and, prior to that, a senior writer at Harper's. He is also a contributing editor at both Golf Digest and Popular Mechanics, and is one of The Fifty Funniest American Writers according to Andy Borowitz. He is the author of more than a dozen books including four on golf. His most recent book is Where the Water Goes: Life and Death along the Colorado River.

Wednesday 10:30-11:15 am • Wednesday 3-3:45 pm
Thursday 3-3:45 pm

Amie Parnes is the Senior White House Correspondent for The Hill newspaper in Washington, D.C. where she covered Hillary Clinton during the 2016 presidential election and is now covering the Trump Administration. She appears frequently on MSNBC and has also been featured on CNN and FOX News. Parnes is the co-author of HRC and Shattered: Inside Hillary Clinton’s Doomed Campaign.

Wednesday 11:30 am-12:15 pm • Wednesday 3-3:45 pm
Thursday 4-4:45 pm

Tom Parker Bowles is one of Britain’s leading food writers and food critics. He is the author of five books including E is for Eating: An Alphabet of Greed, the award-winning Full English: A Journey Through the British and Their Food and Let’s Eat: Recipes From My Kitchen Notebook. His latest book is The Cookbook: Fortnum and Mason. Parker Bowles is also the restaurant critic for The Mail on Sunday and food editor of Esquire.

Wednesday 9:30-10:15 am • Thursday 3-3:45 pm

Benjamin Reiss is a professor of English at Emory University. Professor Reiss specializes in American cultural history, with a focus on issues of health, race, and disability. In his own words, “I try to capture experiences that have been pushed to the margins of history: sleep, madness, freakishness.” He is the author of The Showman and the Slave, Theaters of Madness, and Wild Nights: How Taming Sleep Created Our Restless World and the recipient of a Guggenheim fellowship.

Wednesday 4-4:45 pm • Thursday 8:30-9:15 am
Thursday 1-1:45 pm

Amie Parnes is the Senior White House Correspondent for The Hill newspaper in Washington, D.C. where she covered Hillary Clinton during the 2016 presidential election and is now covering the Trump Administration. She appears frequently on MSNBC and has also been featured on CNN and FOX News. Parnes is the co-author of HRC and Shattered: Inside Hillary Clinton’s Doomed Campaign.

Wednesday 11:30 am-12:15 pm • Wednesday 3-3:45 pm
Thursday 4-4:45 pm

Dr. Helen Rappaport is a British historian, author, and former actress. As an historian, she specializes in the Victorian era and revolutionary Russia and is the author of thirteen books, including Ekaterinburg: The Last Days of the Romanovs and Magnificent Obsession: Victoria, Albert and the Death that Changed the Monarchy. Her 13th book The Victoria Letters has been written to tie in with the ITV drama series of the same name.

Wednesday 11:30 am-12:15 pm
Thursday 11:30 am-12:15 pm • Friday 9:30-10:15 am

Richard North Patterson is a writer, lawyer and political commentator. He has written 22 novels, many of which were best-sellers. Known for his thorough research, his topics ranged from gun violence to abortion to Al Qaeda plots to steal a nuclear bomb. In 2015, Patterson retired from fiction writing and began devoting his time to political commentary. During the 2016 presidential campaign, Patterson was a contributing opinion writer for The Huffington Post. His book about that campaign, Fever Swamp, was published in January 2017.

Wednesday 11:30 am-12:15 pm • Thursday 1-1:45 pm
Thursday 4-4:45 pm

Dr. Elisabeth Rosenthal is the editor-in-chief of Kaiser Health News and the author of An American Sickness, a shocking investigation into America’s healthcare system. A former ER physician, Dr. Rosenthal was also an award-winning reporter at The New York Times for twenty-two years, gaining acclaim for her coverage of health and health policy issues.

Wednesday 10:30–11:15 am • Thursday 9:30–10:15 am

Hanna Rosin is a writer and co-host of Invisibilia, a show from NPR about the unseen forces that control human behavior—our ideas, beliefs, assumptions, and thoughts. Most recently Rosin was a national correspondent for The Atlantic, where she wrote cover stories about various corners of American culture. She is a longtime writer for Slate and host of the DoubleX Gabfest where she discusses things women want to talk about and men want to eavesdrop on. She is also the author of two books, including The End of Men.

Wednesday 3-3:45 pm • Thursday 10:30-11:15 am
Thursday 2-2:45 pm

Tom Parker Bowles is one of Britain’s leading food writers and food critics. He is the author of five books including E is for Eating: An Alphabet of Greed, the award-winning Full English: A Journey Through the British and Their Food and Let’s Eat: Recipes From My Kitchen Notebook. His latest book is The Cookbook: Fortnum and Mason. Parker Bowles is also the restaurant critic for The Mail on Sunday and food editor of Esquire.

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Wednesday 9:30-10:15 am • Thursday 3-3:45 pm

Wednesday 10:30–11:15 am • Thursday 10:30–11:15 am
Thursday 4–4:45 pm

Shaka Senghor is a writer, mentor, director’s fellow of the MIT Media Lab and motivational speaker whose story of redemption has inspired young adults at high schools and universities across the nation. While serving 19 years in prison, Senghor discovered his love for writing. He also teaches a class as part of the Atonement Project, a partnership between him, the University of Michigan, and the MIT Media Lab. Senghor has written six books, including a memoir about his life in prison, Writing My Wrongs.

Wednesday 2–2:45 pm • Thursday 4–4:45 pm

Suzanne Somers is a best-selling author, actress, entrepreneur and long time health advocate. As an actor, Somers is best known for her role as the mysterious blonde driving the Thunderbird in George Lucas’ cult classic, American Graffiti. She also played the lovable Chrissy on the hit TV show, Three’s Company. Somers has received numerous awards including an Emmy nomination and People’s Choice Award. As an author and health advocate, she founded ForeverHealth.com, an online resource to connect patients with doctors specializing in natural medicine and a partner and ambassador for Livewave.com, a global technology company. She has written 26 books with over 25 million copies in print, including her latest book, Two’s Company.

Friday 9:30–10:15 am

Danzy Senna is a novelist and essayist. Her first work, Caucasia, has been translated into ten languages and has won multiple awards. The winner of a Whiting Award, Senna is the author of three novels, a memoir, and a short-story collection, along with numerous essays. She is considered one of today’s most widely respected voices tackling multiracial and complex social identities. She is also a frequent contributor to The New Yorker, Vogue and The New York Times.

Wednesday 8:30–9:15 am • Thursday 1–1:45 pm
Thursday 3–3:45 pm

Bret Stephens is an op-ed columnist for The New York Times focusing on foreign and domestic policy. Previously, Stephens had a long career at The Wall Street Journal, where he was deputy editorial-page editor and, for 11 years, foreign affairs columnist. He has reported from around the world and interviewed scores of world leaders. Stephens is the author of America in Retreat: The New Isolationism and the Coming Global Disorder. He is the recipient of numerous awards and distinctions, including two honorary doctorates and the 2013 Pulitzer Prize for commentary.

Wednesday 10:30–11:15 am • Wednesday 3–3:45 pm
Thursday 8:30–9:15 am


Wednesday 9:30–10:15 am • Wednesday 2–2:45 pm
Thursday 8:30–9:15 am

Sally Bedell Smith is an historian and best-selling author of several biographies, including the biography of William S. Paley, In All His Glory, and Reflected Glory: The Life of Pamela Churchill Harriman. Her latest book is Prince Charles: The Passions and Paradoxes of an Improbable Life. A contributing editor at Vanity Fair since 1996, she previously worked at TIME and The New York Times, where she was a cultural news reporter.

Wednesday 8:30–9:15 am • Thursday 9:30–10:15 am
Friday 8:30–9:15 am • Friday 10:30–11:15 am
Dr. Eric Topol is a leading cardiologist who has embraced the study of genomics and the latest advances in technology to treat chronic disease. As director of the Scripps Translational Science Institute in La Jolla, California, Dr. Topol uses the study of genomics to propel game-changing medical research. The Institute combines clinical investigation with scientific theory, training physicians and scientists for research-based careers. He also serves on the board of the West Wireless Health Institute, discovering how wireless technology can change the future of health care.

Wednesday 11:30 am–12:15 pm • Thursday 10:30-11:15 am

Amor Towles, a former Wall Street director of research, is the best-selling author of *Rules of Civility*. Towles’ second novel, *A Gentleman in Moscow*, was on *The New York Times* best-seller list for over twenty weeks and was named one of the best books of 2016 by *The Chicago Tribune*, *The Washington Post*, *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, *The San Francisco Chronicle*, and NPR. The book is being translated into over twenty languages including Russian.

Wednesday 1–1:45 pm • Thursday 4–4:45 pm

Scott Turow is a best-selling author and attorney. He has written nine novels, which have been translated into more than 25 languages and have sold more than 25 million copies worldwide. Turow continues to work as an attorney and is a partner in the Chicago office of Sonnenschein, Nath & Rosenthal, concentrating on white-collar criminal defense. He also devotes a substantial part of his time to pro bono matters.

Wednesday 9:30–10:15 am • Wednesday 2–2:45 pm
Thursday 8:30–9:15 am • Thursday 1–1:45 pm
Thursday 3–3:45 pm

Ayelet Waldman is the best-selling author of *A Really Good Day: How Micro-dosing Made a Mega Difference in My Mood, My Marriage, and My Life*, the novels *Love and Treasure*, *Red Hook Road*, *Love and Other Impossible Pursuits*, and *Daughter’s Keeper*, and the Mommy-Track Mystery series. Waldman was a Federal public defender and an adjunct professor at the UC Berkeley law school where she developed and taught a course on the legal implications of the War on Drugs.

Thursday 1–1:45 pm • Thursday 2–2:45 pm

Colson Whitehead is the number 1 *New York Times* best-selling author of *The Underground Railroad*, winner of the 2016 Pulitzer Prize in Fiction, the 2016 National Book Award, Arthur C. Clark Award and named one of the Ten Best Books of the Year by *The New York Times* Book Review. He is the author of *The Noble Hustle, Zone One, Sag Harbor, The Intuitionist, John Henry Days, Apex Hides the Hurt*, and *The Colossus of New York*. Whitehead is also the recipient of the MacArthur and Guggenheim fellowships as well as a Man Booker finalist.

Wednesday 11:30 am–12:15 pm • Thursday 10:30-11:15 am
Thursday 3–3:45 pm

Mishna Wolff is a writer and humorist living in Los Angeles. She is originally from Seattle, where she was raised in a blended African American family in a poor minority neighborhood. Her coming of age memoir, *I’m Down*, is a hilarious dysfunctional family story about growing up in an all-black neighborhood and her struggle to fit in. After a modeling stint in New York she made her way back to Los Angeles and onto the stage at The Upright Citizens Brigade doing stand up comedy. She has been featured on VH1, Comedy Central, Air America and NPR.

Wednesday 8:30–9:15 am • Wednesday 3–3:45 pm

Dr. Eric Topol is a leading cardiologist who has embraced the study of genomics and the latest advances in technology to treat chronic disease. As director of the Scripps Translational Science Institute in La Jolla, California, Dr. Topol uses the study of genomics to propel game-changing medical research. The Institute combines clinical investigation with scientific theory, training physicians and scientists for research-based careers. He also serves on the board of the West Wireless Health Institute, discovering how wireless technology can change the future of health care.

Wednesday 11:30 am–12:15 pm • Thursday 10:30-11:15 am

Thursday 8:30–9:15 am • Thursday 1–1:45 pm
Thursday 2–2:45 pm

George W. Baker is a graduate of Columbia College and Columbia Law School. He practices law in New Canaan, Connecticut. In 2008, he created a one-man show to represent the humor and patriotism of President John Adams. He has performed all across the United States at venues large and small.

Wednesday 2–2:45 pm

Peter Bart started his career as a newsman with The Wall Street Journal and The New York Times, then spent seventeen years as a film executive (vice president of Paramount, senior vice president of MGM, President of Lorimar Film Co.) only to return to journalism as editor-in-chief of Variety. Along the way, he was responsible for eight books, including Shoot-Out, written with Peter Guber, Dangerous Company and two nonfiction books, The Gross and Fade Out.

Friday 10:30–11:15 am

Senator Barbara Boxer is the just retired U.S. Senator from California. She continues the work to which she’s dedicated 30 years in the fight for women, families, inequality and environmental protection. Sometimes lauded, sometimes vilified, but always standing tough, Boxer has fought for what is right even when her personal convictions conflicted with her party or the majority rule. She is the author of The Art of Tough: Fearlessly Facing Politics and Life.

Thursday 11:30 am–12:15 pm

David Bryant is the Director of the Rancho Mirage Library & Observatory, Executive Director of the Rancho Mirage Writers Festival and CEO of the Library Foundation. He is a frequent contributor to numerous magazines and journals. He is an accomplished folk artist.

Wednesday 9:30–10:15 am • Wednesday 10:30–11:10 am
Wednesday 2–2:45 pm • Wednesday 4–4:45 pm
Thursday 8:30–9:15 am

Geoffrey Cowan is an educator, playwright, Emmy Award-winning producer and author of Let the People Rule: Theodore Roosevelt and the Birth of the Presidential Primary. He was the inaugural President of the Annenberg Foundation Trust at Sunnylands and Chairman emeritus of the Annenberg School of Communication at USC.

Wednesday 2–2:45 pm • Wednesday 4–4:45 pm
Thursday 11:30 am–12:15 pm • Thursday 2–2:45 pm


Wednesday 3–3:45 pm • Thursday 9:30–10:15 am

Honorable Gray Davis is the 37th Governor of California, recognized for his leadership in education, infrastructure and health insurance. Davis is a graduate of Stanford University and Columbia Law School and was awarded the Bronze Star for his service in Vietnam.

Thursday 11:30 am–12:15 pm

Susan Eisenhower is a consultant, author, and expert on international security, space policy, energy, and relations between the Russian Federation and the U.S. She is the granddaughter of President Dwight D. Eisenhower. A lifelong Republican, she made headlines in 2008 by famously endorsing Barack Obama for President and leaving the Republican Party to become an Independent.

Wednesday 10:30–11:15 am • Wednesday 11:30 am–12:15 pm
Thursday 10:30–11:15 am • Thursday 1–1:45 pm
Thursday 4–4:45 pm
Sharon Hall is president of Endemol Shine Studios and most recently served as President of Alcon Television Group, where she launched the studio’s TV division. Previously, Sharon served as Executive Vice President and head of drama for Sony Pictures TV overseeing the development of hit shows *Breaking Bad*, *Damages*, *Masters of Sex* and *Justified*. She first joined Sony in 2005, rising through the studio’s ranks and helping develop some of the top hits of the last decade.

Thursday 2–2:45 pm

Todd Ellis Kessler is a television writer-producer who has worked on such award-winning or nominated series as *The Good Wife*, *Nashville*, *The Practice*, *The Unit* and *Rome* (HBO). Kessler has won four Emmy Awards, an International Emmy Award and a Columbia DuPont citation.

Thursday 2–2:45 pm

Tara Lazar was born and raised in Palm Springs. The sunny climes of her hometown and a well-traveled upbringing influence the worldly outlook of Lazar’s dining concepts, which include Cheeky’s, Birba, Mr. Lyons, Seymour’s, and her hotel Alcazar Palm Springs. Part restaurateur, part hotelier, part chef, and part creative director, Lazar, along with her hospitality group F10 Creative, curate colorful memories and unique shared experiences.

Wednesday 9:30–10:15 am

Dr. Khoi Le, who was born and raised in Vietnam, came to the United States at the age of 14. After graduating with honors from Harvard College and Harvard Medical School, he trained in his specialty at Massachusetts General in Boston and now serves as one of 13 cardiologists at the renowned Eisenhower Desert Cardiology Center. In addition to teaching and lecturing, Dr. Le has performed medical mission work throughout Asia and South America and in 1977 performed the first stent procedure in his homeland, Vietnam.

Wednesday 9:30–10:15 am • Wednesday 1–1:45 pm

Thursday 9:30–10:15 am

Daisy Lewis is a British actress and producer. Before attending university, she wrote for *The Sunday Telegraph* and *The Art Newspaper*. She attended King’s College London, where she studied English literature. Lewis started her career at the Royal Court Theatre in Joe Hill Gibbins production of *The Good Family*. Lewis’ television career started in *After You’ve Gone*, the “Gridlock” episode of *Doctor Who*, *Lewis*, *From Time to Time*, and *Pusher*. She then joined *Downton Abbey* as local schoolteacher Miss Sarah Bunting and also played opposite Michael Gambon and Lindsay Duncan in *Churchill’s Secret*.

Wednesday 8:30–9:15 am • Thursday 9:30–10:15 am

Thursday 3–3:45 pm • Thursday 4–4:45 pm

Jason Matthews is a retired CIA Officer having spent 33 years in the Directorate of Operations (National Clandestine Service) as a case officer and senior manager. He served overseas in nine separate duty posts including in Europe, Central Europe and Asia. Matthews managed operations in Counter intelligence and Counter-proliferation and specialized in “denied-areas operations” and clandestine collection in dangerous or restrictive environments. Matthews is the author of several novels including *Red Sparrow* which is being made into a feature film starring Jennifer Lawrence.

Friday 9:30–10:15 am

Suzanne Matthews is a retired CIA Officer having spent 33 years in the Directorate of Operations (National Clandestine Service) as a case officer and senior manager. She served overseas in nine separate duty posts including in Budapest, Havana and Hong Kong. Matthews also served as Chief of Personnel for Europe and Counter-proliferation Divisions at CIA Headquarters. After retirement she continued to work as a clandestine recruiter for sensitive programs.

Friday 9:30–10:15 am

Patt Morrison is a writer for the *Los Angeles Times* and has received two Pulitzer Prizes, six Emmys and 11 Golden Mike awards for her work as a radio and television host. In her honor, Pink’s, the legendary Hollywood hotdog stand, named its vegetarian hot dog after Patt.

Wednesday 8:30–9:15 am • Wednesday 11:30 am–12:15 pm

Wednesday 3–3:45 pm • Wednesday 4–4:45 pm

Thursday 10:30–11:15 am • Thursday 4–4:45 pm
Van Gordon Sauter was president of FOX news and CBS news and is the former chairman and now a member of the California boxing commission. Van started his career as a local TV anchorman for CBS in Chicago and worked as Paris bureau chief, President of CBS Sports and CBS News and executive vice-president of CBS Television Group. He is married to Kathleen Brown, former California State Treasurer and sister of Gov. Jerry Brown.

**Thursday 9:30–10:15 am • Thursday 4–4:45 pm**

Elizabeth Kabler Sorensen, a Trustee of the Annenberg Foundation Trust at Sunnylands, is an art advisor and curator. She is the founder of Skylight Projects, a board member of Desert X Exhibition of Art and Creative Time in New York. She resides in London with her husband Johan and three children.

**Wednesday 9:30–10:15 am • Wednesday 11:30 am–12:15 pm • Thursday 11:30 am–12:15 pm • Thursday 4–4:45 pm**

Johan Sorensen was born in New York and raised in Oslo, Barcelona and London. He studied Scandinavian history and literature at University College London before going on to qualify as a psychotherapist. He has lived and worked in the USA, Europe and the Middle East. Sorensen is a founder of Music Support and sits on the board of mental health charities in the U.K. and in the U.S.

**Wednesday 4–4:45 pm • Thursday 11:30 am–12:15 pm • Thursday 2–2:45 pm**

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**BOOK SIGNING AND STORE**

**Book Store Hours**

- **Rancho Mirage Library & Observatory**
  - 8:00 am–4:00 pm, Wednesday and Thursday
  - 7:30 am–1:00 pm, Friday

You may purchase books, get them signed and then leave them at the pop-up store for later pick up.

**Payment may be made by credit card, check or cash**

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“**There are still more public libraries in this country than there are McDonald’s.**”

— David McCullough
The Rancho Mirage Writers Festival Foundation sponsors the Rancho Mirage Writers Festival Book Club. This free event is hosted at the Rancho Mirage Library & Observatory, where readers gather to discuss books such as The General vs. the President by H.W. Brand, My Life in Middlemarch by Rebecca Mead and The Sympathizer by Viet Thanh Nguyen. The Book Club meets at the Library the third Wednesday of the month at 6:30 pm, October to June.

Please join us by contacting Susan Cook at (760) 341-7323 or susan@ranchomiragelibrary.org.

RMWF WRITERS SERIES

The Foundation began an exciting new event this year, the RMWF Writers Series. The Foundation presented a series of talks by eminent authors throughout the year. These events were free and took place at the Rancho Mirage Library & Observatory.

Amie Parnes
Shattered: Inside Hillary Clinton’s Doomed Campaign

Don Winslow
The Force

Craig Johnson
The Western Star and An Obvious Fact

For more information on these events, check our website at www.rmwritersfest.org
TIPS TO HELP YOU ENJOY THE FESTIVAL

Have questions or need assistance?

There is a guest services desk at the library where you will find a lost and found. Staff members are also eager to help. They are wearing RMWF polo shirts and STAFF lanyards.

Comment forms are available.

We would love to hear what you liked and your suggestions for the 2019 Rancho Mirage Writers Festival.

• Doors to the Library will open at 7:30 am each morning. Coffee will be available at 7:30 am each morning on the patio, sponsored by Desert Allergy, Diane and Dr. David Waldman.

• Admission to all events is with a personalized all-access lanyard. Please wear it at all times. Your lanyard gives you access to the library during the festival as well as lunch. Replacement lanyards will not be issued.

• Author sessions last approximately 45 minutes. Some authors will leave time for questions and answers. During the Q & A, please speak clearly and limit your interactions to a single question.

• Seating is available at each venue on a first come, first served basis. If a room at the library is full to capacity, we suggest that you enjoy an author in another room. Purchase of a Festival pass does not guarantee admission to any individual presentation.

• Please greet our writers, introduce yourself, and give them a warm Rancho Mirage welcome.

• Please silence all cell phones and electronic devices before the start of each event. Feel free to tweet, post to Facebook, and use other social media to tell friends about your favorite authors. No flash photography or audio/visual recording is permitted.

• The temperature in the building can and does fluctuate, so it is best to dress in layers or bring a sweater.

• The 15 minute intervals between presentations are perfect times to purchase books and get your favorite authors to sign them. Authors will be signing books between sessions.

• To access the Library WiFi, sign onto the “Rancho Public” network, open an Internet browser app or window, and you are on!
RESTAURANT PARTNERS

After a stimulating day at the festival, adjourn to one of these great local restaurants for an early dinner. These restaurants will be offering a discount to festival goers January 24–26. Please call for reservations and be sure and wear your badge to receive your discount.

ACQUA
71-700 CA-111
Rancho Mirage, CA 92270
tel: 760-862-9800

IL CORSO
73520 El Paseo
Palm Desert, CA 92260
tel: 760-341-6700

LE DONNE CUCINA ITALIANA
72-624 El Paseo
Palm Desert, CA 92260
tel: 760-773-9441

MR. LYONS
233 E. Palm Canyon Dr.
Palm Springs, CA 92264
tel: 760-327-1551

MR. LYONS STEAKHOUSE
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PIZZA VINO
73722 El Paseo #1
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tel: (760) 568-9898

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72655 Highway 111
Palm Desert, CA 92260
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71775 Highway 111
Rancho Mirage, CA 92270
tel: 760-568-9321
BE AN ANGEL!

By donating $5,000, you help support honoraria and travel for our truly amazing Festival writers.

Our Angels allow us to make this Festival a world-class event, with some of the best writers in the world. With the support of our Angels we are also able to keep the cost of Festival passes low, compared to other festivals that charge as much as $1,000 per person.

Only a limited number of people can be Angels each year.

Angel Benefits Include:

- Two all access passes
- Reserved seating for all writer’s talks
- Angels only evening event with dinner and keynote speaker
- Reserved seating for lunch each day
- Dedicated concierge service

Donations to the Rancho Mirage Writers Festival, a 501(C)(3) organization, are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law. Federal Tax ID number 37-1754922
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The Festival would not come together, be as organized, and such a friendly experience for our Angels and Readers without Aaron Espinosa. As Library Operations Manager, Aaron oversees staffing, basic logistics, and attendee services. He is the architect of our Festival and he makes the magic happen. And thank you to his wife for letting him work so hard on our behalf.

Robin Gold retired as the Executive Director of the Savannah Book Festival, moved West and has become a great addition to the RMWF team. Robin is our C-SPAN Books facilitator responsible for getting C-SPAN Books to cover our Festival and in addition she launched our Rancho Mirage Writers Series.

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Sincere thanks to the Rancho Mirage Police Department for traffic control and security.
Thank you to Diane and Dr. David Waldman for sponsoring the Koffi Cart.

Rancho Mirage City Attorney Steve Quintanilla, and his able team of lawyers, have given hundreds of hours of legal services to the Writers Festival. Their generous contribution has assisted in many ways, making the Festival a success since the first year, 2014.
Without these terrific partners and sponsors, the Rancho Mirage Writers Festival would not be possible.
We are pleased to announce that Bryn and Richard DeBeikes have underwritten a program to bring exceptional college students from southern California universities, including USC and UCLA, to participate in the 2018 Rancho Mirage Writers Festival. These talented students will fully participate in the Festival, as well as engage in private meetings with Festival authors.

We are grateful to Jeannette and Raymond Galante for sponsoring the best and brightest students in the Coachella Valley, along with their teachers, to attend the 2017 Festival.

Pictured to the left: Galante Scholars with Festival favorite Dave Barry.
The Sixth Annual
Rancho Mirage Writers Festival
January 23-25, 2019
“GREAT WARS”

Passes will go on sale March 1, 2018. Prices will not be increased for the 2019 Festival. Look for an email with more details.

RMWF Mississippi River Cruise
Cruising October 13 to 20, 2018, aboard a stunning new ship

Cruising the Mississippi River and its tributaries is an exploration of the American spirit. Gliding past the rolling farmland is an experience set in a time past and a testament to the ingenuity of the pioneers who first traveled these waters. The fabric of the region is brought to life through our delicious regional cuisine, great onboard music, and customized excursions to historical landmarks.

We will be cruising on a brand new ship! Included in the cruise is one night in Memphis on October 12. There is also an option to stay one night in New Orleans at additional cost on October 20. Airfare is not included. There are only 100 cabins, and they are selling quickly.

For pricing, additional information, or to reserve your cabin, contact Marjorie Kulp at mzmarge@gmail.com.

Join Helene Galen and me as we cruise the Mississippi.
—Jamie Kabler

Famed presidential historian Douglas Brinkley will be on board to give a talk on the Civil War
Noted Southern historian Robert Hicks will greet us in Memphis
Private tour in Natchez with renowned mystery writer Greg Iles, author of Mississippi Blood
The Sixth Annual Rancho Mirage Writers Festival will be January 23-25, 2019

Passes for the 2019 RMWF will go on sale March 1, 2018. Look for an email with more details.