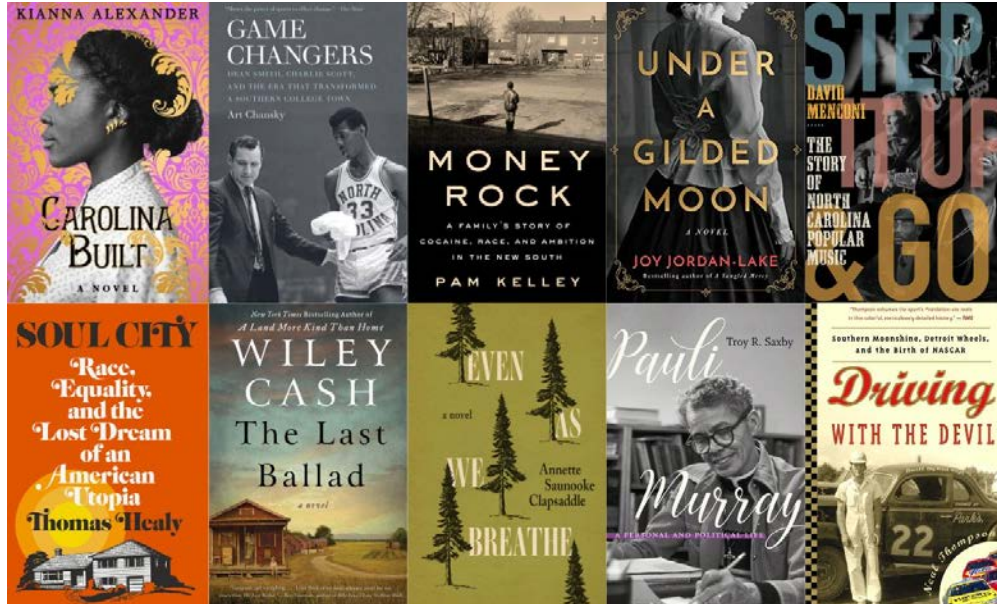


**North Carolina Humanities submitting for North Carolina Reads (2022 & 2023)**



North Carolina Humanities is nominating its council-conducted program, North Carolina Reads, for the 2023 Helen and Martin Schwartz Prize.

In 2022, North Carolina Humanities (NCH) celebrated its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary as the leading nonprofit organization charged with advancing public access to and support for the humanities across North Carolina. During our 50<sup>th</sup> year, we created, facilitated, and funded humanities programs to help North Carolinians consider new perspectives and think about the past, the present, and the future. Among our many successful 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary special programs and grant opportunities, we proudly launched North Carolina Reads, North Carolina’s premier statewide book club.

Seeing an opportunity for North Carolinians to engage with questions of racial justice, gender equity, and the ever-changing American landscape, NCH applied for and was awarded a \$50,000 special initiative grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) entitled “A More Perfect Union.” Through this funding and NCH investments, NCH launched North Carolina Reads to instant public success. Due to the immense popularity of the program, NCH offered North Carolina Reads again in 2023 and is currently planning for the 2024 season.

North Carolina Reads is a free, statewide book club, that annually features five books that explore issues of racial, social, and gender equity and the history and culture of North Carolina. NCH hosts monthly virtual book club events (February – June) where participants hear from guest speakers, including book authors, scholars, and topic experts. Libraries, community groups, and individuals across North Carolina read along with NCH and then host their own local virtual and in-person community book discussion programs to accompany NCH’s virtual events.

As the designated North Carolina Center for the Book, an affiliate of the national Center for the Book in the Library of Congress, books, reading, literacy, and literary history are an important part

of NCH's mission. At the heart of North Carolina Reads is NCH's desire to connect communities through shared reading experiences. Reading with others develops critical-thinking skills; strengthens minds, vocabulary, and mental health; and creates opportunities to empathize with others' stories and experiences.



*"Carolina Built" Discussion*

North Carolina Reads virtual book club events are structured as 1-hour moderated conversational discussions between the book's author and a subject matter expert related to the book's themes, ending with an audience Question and Answer. Just in its second year, North Carolina Reads has already brought 23 professional, award-winning authors, scholars, and topic experts to public audiences. Many of the books are written by authors who are from, lived in, or currently reside in North Carolina.

To expand accessibility in underserved communities, NCH offers a limited number of North Carolina Reads book boxes to readers, which includes their selection of the five book titles, unique swag, a bookmark, and NCH-curated program and discussion guides. In 2023, 60% of book box resources were sent to groups in rural communities. Many groups noted that without our resources and free copies of the book, they never would have been able to participate in the program or host an event in their local community. Both the discussion guide and program planning guide are free to download on NCH's website and are created each year to help readers engage with the books and their themes. North Carolina Reads is unique because readers keep their books from the book box after the series is complete as a way to further literacy and conversations about North Carolina stories and experiences. NCH has proven to be an essential resource, especially to local, community-based book club groups and rural libraries with limited capacity. In 2022, NCH supplied over 3,200 free books and in 2023 supplied over 3,600. In 2024 we anticipate supplying 4,000 free books to North Carolinians around the state. Year after year we continue to increase our resource supplies to keep up with public demand.



*"Driving with the Devil" Discussion*

Everyone is welcome at North Carolina Reads events. Participants do not need to have read the books to attend virtual book events or have received an NCH book box. Invigorating small businesses and advocating for community resources, NCH encourages people to check with their local library and local bookstores for assistance in finding book copies. NCH also established a partnership with the State Library of North Carolina Accessible Books & Library Services to ensure that accessibility was a core theme of the program from its inception. All North Carolina Reads book discussion events include closed captioning, are recorded, and subsequently added to NCH's YouTube so that the public can re-watch and share them at any time.

North Carolina Reads has been successful in helping NCH reach new audiences, as almost half of North Carolina Reads survey respondents in 2022 indicated this was their first NCH event. Due to the subject matter, authors, and topic experts involved, North Carolina Reads appeals not only to those who read the books but also to individuals who are generally curious about the topics. In 2022 and 2023 North Carolina Reads attendees came from all 14 of North Carolina's congressional districts, and from other states including Alabama, California, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, New York, Ohio, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia.



"Money Rock" Discussion

North Carolina Reads has staying power. After our pilot year in 2022, 98.9% of surveyed participants indicated they would attend a future North Carolina Reads event. In 2023, nearly 2,000 people attended NCH's virtual book club and community-based North Carolina Reads events. Ensuring that North Carolina Reads reflects the needs and interests of communities, in July 2023, NCH launched a public book selection survey that gave authors and readers a voice in the direction of the 2024 program. As a result, over 450 individuals responded, making it one of our most successful public feedback mechanisms.

Along with the amazingly talented authors and topic experts, NCH has worked with a number of organizations and sponsors to support and promote North Carolina Reads including the NEH, the Library of Congress, the State Library of North Carolina, the University of North Carolina (UNC) Chapel Hill, UNC Press, the NASCAR Hall of Fame, the Erik Jones Foundation, the Charlotte Museum of History, the North Carolina Music Hall of Fame, Devil's Logic Brewing, *Our State Magazine*, and more. In the future, NCH will continue to seek partnerships that support the goals of North Carolina Reads.

In 2022, North Carolina Reads featured:

- February - *Soul City: Race, Equality, and the Lost Dream of an American Utopia*. Discussion with author Thomas Healy and Dr. Kofi Boone, Professor of Landscape Architecture and Environmental Planning at North Carolina State University (NCSU).
- March - *The Last Ballad*. Discussion with author Wiley Cash and Dr. David Zonderman, Professor of History at NCSU.



- April - *Even As We Breathe*. Discussion with author Annette Saunooke Clapsaddle and Dr. Trey Adcock, Professor and Director of American Indian and Indigenous Studies at UNC Asheville.
- May - *Pauli Murray: A Personal and Political Life*. Discussion with author Troy R. Saxby and Barbara Lau, then-Executive Director of the Pauli Murray Center for History and Social Justice.
- June - *Driving with the Devil: Southern Moonshine, Detroit Wheels, and the Birth of NASCAR*. Discussion with author Neal Thompson, Dr. Daniel S. Pierce, Professor of History at UNC Asheville, and Erik Jones, NASCAR Cup Series driver.

In 2023, North Carolina Reads featured:

- February - *Carolina Built*. Discussion with author Kianna Alexander and Dr. Hilary Green, James B. Duke Professor of Africana Studies at Davidson College.
- March - *Game Changers: Dean Smith, Charlie Scott, and the Era that Transformed a Southern College Town*. Discussion with author Art Chansky and Dr. Matthew Andrews, Associate Teaching Professor in History at UNC Chapel Hill.
- April - *Money Rock: A Family's Story of Cocaine, Race, and Ambition in the New South*. Discussion with author Pam Kelley, Dr. Seth Kotch, Associate Professor of American Studies and Director of the Southern Oral History Program at UNC Chapel Hill, Dr. Barbara Lash, Geography & Earth Sciences instructor at UNC Charlotte, and Belton "Money Rock" Platt.
- May - *Under a Gilded Moon*. Discussion with author Joy Jordan-Lake and Jennifer Le Zotte, Associate Professor at UNC Wilmington.
- June - *Step It Up and Go: The Story of North Carolina Popular Music, from Blind Boy Fuller and Doc Watson to Nina Simone and Superchunk*. Discussion with author David Menconi and Dolphus Ramseur, Independent Record Label President and North Carolina Music Hall of Fame trustee.

We hope you agree that North Carolina Reads is an important, inventive, and worthy project to receive the 2023 Schwartz Prize. Thank you for your consideration.



Electronic image(s) and/or links to media:

1. 2023 UNC Charlotte interview: <https://pages.charlotte.edu/mark-west/blog/2023/01/17/north-carolina-humanities-brings-back-north-carolina-reads/>
2. 2023 Art Chansky radio interview: <https://chapelboro.com/sports/art-chansky-discusses-his-book-game-changers-being-selected-for-nc-reads>
3. 2023 Photos from in-person (and livestreamed) discussion of *Money Rock*: <https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.10167460996035234&type=3>
4. 2022 *Our State* profile: <https://www.ourstate.com/for-the-love-of-books/>
5. 2022 Photos from in-person (and livestreamed) discussion of *Driving with the Devil*: <https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.10166334558005234&type=3>

Links to program information online (either council, partner, or program-specific webpage)

1. Main Webpage: <https://nchumanities.org/program/north-carolina-reads/>
2. North Carolina Reads 2023 recorded programs: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TEn3yAM-zIEE&list=PLQevEiLJkOe5n9Z3OrOiPAVgXhZrijfjI&pp=iAQB>
3. North Carolina Reads 2022 recorded programs: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cwe33vogF3o&list=PLQevEiLJkOe4i9e\\_GihOvPzYeLkHhZWHwz&pp=iAQB](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cwe33vogF3o&list=PLQevEiLJkOe4i9e_GihOvPzYeLkHhZWHwz&pp=iAQB)

Application Questions:

1. If you had to describe your project's impact on all involved in three words, what would they be?
  - a. Connection
  - b. Enrichment
  - c. Empathy
2. What did your council staff learn from taking on this project, and how will that inform future projects?
  - a. NCH staff found that communities and individuals were seeking a safe space to engage in conversation with others about topics of importance informed by the context of North Carolina history and culture. NCH staff also learned of the immense need for cost-effective programs and resources with high quality, trusted content. Affected by staffing vacancies and the lingering impacts of COVID-19, many libraries and community organizations are limited in their capacity, however, the demand for their services is higher than before the pandemic. The curated content and flexible structure of this program allows for groups and readers to easily engage with books and stories that may not otherwise be accessible.
  - b. While researching and implementing this program, NCH staff identified a need for greater statewide leadership to forge connections across the rural-urban divide and across regions within the state. North Carolina Reads allowed us to create new collaborations and engage with our statewide peers in new ways, enhancing our reputation statewide. We look forward to the fruit of these new collaborations.
  - c. This program has also allowed NCH staff to experiment with new ways to engage public feedback and ensure that individual voices are heard in the design of programs.



We anticipate that these new methods will impact the conception and design of future programs, allowing us to better serve the state.

3. **Fast forward three? number of years into the future: where do you see this project? Has it evolved? If it was intended to have a shorter life-span, what was its impact?**
  - a. North Carolina Reads continues to be NCH's flagship program. In the future we anticipate engaging new readers to grow a strong, statewide community of readers. By continuing to select diverse texts and highlight new voices, the program will increase the public's understanding, respect and empathy for each other and their stories. Between the first and second years of operation, requests for program materials doubled. Over the next three years the program will continue to grow, and we anticipate seeking new corporate/community partnerships to allow for the distribution of more resources.
4. **What partners or collaborators would you like to acknowledge, and what was their impact on this program?**
  - a. NCH wishes to acknowledge the authors, scholars, and topic experts who have engaged with North Carolina Reads. Without their expertise our content would not have been as robust and insightful. NCH also wishes to thank the NEH for their initial and ongoing investments as well as the Library of Congress Center for the Book, as we are their state affiliate, and the State Library of North Carolina, our long-term partner. There are many other organizations and individuals to thank for their involvement, including NCH's board of trustees, many of whom served as moderators for North Carolina Reads events and have supported this program strongly from its inception.
5. **A pre-approved quote from your Council's ED or Program Director that summarizes the significance of the program in their own words (for promotional purposes)**
  - a. "North Carolina Reads is important because it demonstrates what humanities councils are capable of. We must meet people where they are to ensure that all residents have a safe space to discuss and explore topics that are important to them and their community. During the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, as we all recognized the importance of true connection, North Carolina Humanities reevaluated how programs could connect people and help communities heal. Believing the humanities are a pathway to peace and empathy, we created North Carolina Reads. North Carolina Reads encourages engaging, productive conversation among participants to expand reader's compassion for other's stories and experiences and to enrich the lives of all North Carolinians. Today, connection remains an important cornerstone of our mission and North Carolina Reads has become our flagship program, leading the way in building bridges and fostering understanding and respect. I am so thankful for a team, staff, and board, that were willing to roll their sleeves up and help create this life-changing program." – Sherry Paula Watkins, North Carolina Humanities Executive Director
6. **How does this project fulfill a need within your community?**
  - a. When creating this program, NCH staff identified a need for high quality program resources to support capacity in underserved communities. In 2023, 60% of book box resources were sent to groups in rural communities. The flexible design of North Car-



olina Reads allows communities to participate at their own level of capacity and encourages organizations to take the curated content into activities that make sense for their local context. For example...

- i. After the isolation of the pandemic years, North Carolina Reads provides welcomed opportunities for connection across physical space. Communities across the state and nation are divided over many issues, but North Carolina Reads leverages our shared love of story to create new shared experiences by hosting virtual book discussions where people can engage with authors and experts who they may not otherwise be able to hear from.
- ii. North Carolina Reads brings noted authors and scholars to communities beyond the urban areas and college towns in our state. These high-quality experts take the enjoyment of reading to the next level with context and insightful conversation to help readers develop critical-thinking skills and empathize with others' stories and experiences.
- iii. North Carolina Reads creates capacity-building opportunities for local organizations. In one instance, North Carolina Reads helped a museum to achieve their organizational goals of connecting with stakeholders. Due to the flexible design of North Carolina Reads, the museum had the confidence to not only host their own in-person book discussion but also curate a local walking tour based on the book's themes. These activities helped the museum to draw in new visitors, deepen their relationships with existing ones, and recruit new volunteer docents.

OPTIONAL: pre-approved testimonials from participants (attendees, staff)

1. "North Carolina Reads fosters community, literacy, inclusivity, critical thinking, mental stimulation, and overall well-being. The program fulfills the dire need for empathy and cultural understanding in our communities. For example, I learned more about cultural obstacles faced by black athletes on the UNC basketball team and the boldness of the coach to promote equality during a period when diversity was not embraced. I also learned about the Cherokee tribe of North Carolina and the uniqueness of tribal relations. My overall experience as a participant and moderator for North Carolina Reads is one of gratitude for the opportunity to explore North Carolina with fellow North Carolinians." – Lorna Ricotta, North Carolina Humanities 2023 Board Chair
2. "I was thrilled to participate in North Carolina Humanities' North Carolina Reads programs, both as an attendee and as a leader of the conversation about *Carolina Built* by Kianna Alexander. This program is a great way to engage with fellow readers, gain more insight into book plot, and boost a love of reading. The thoughts and opinions shared by the authors themselves clarify some questions readers may have had, provide a broader insight into the craft of writing, and give attendees more meaningful reading experiences. I would highly recommend this program. I am looking forward to next year's!" – Dr. Liliana Wendorff, North Carolina Humanities Trustee/Professor Emerita of Queens University of Charlotte
3. "During our stream of NCH's *Carolina Built* event, there were many conversations about the book, the author, and the meaning behind the book. Once the stream was over, we took the time to give every person the chance to discuss how they felt about the book. Listening to everyone was profound, not only for participants, but also for the library staff. Actively en-



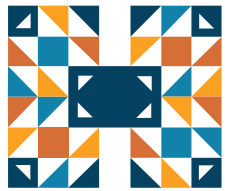
gaging with a tough subject has allowed many of our patrons to have a better understanding of those around them with different life experiences. I am forever grateful that we were able to participate in North Carolina Reads because, not only did it unlock new conversations and new understandings, but it also ended up creating new friendships among people that previously did not know each other in-person.” - 2023 Community Book Discussion Group Leader

4. “All attendees commented how these five books were not necessarily a book they would have chosen to read on their own but how they enjoyed each one. Providing these books to our community and offering them a safe and comfortable environment to discuss these topics in increased knowledge of our current day community as well as historical events from the past. Attendees have commented on how they have spoken to friends and family about these books and how they plan to share the books with others so they too can learn more about the rich history of North Carolina. All attendees commented on how much they learned from the books and from each other.” - 2023 Community Book Discussion Group Leader
5. “I learned more about African American experience[s] and history in North Carolina that should have been taught and discussed in history all along. I also enjoyed learning about African American women in the state and their accomplishments against all the odds.” - 2023 Individual Reader

**OPTIONAL: Up to 10 Media and/or Partner Organization contacts to send announcements to on your behalf, should you win:**

1. Karen Kenton, Director, Office of Federal State Partnership, National Endowment for the Humanities, [kkenton@neh.gov](mailto:kkenton@neh.gov)
2. Michelle Underhill, State Librarian of North Carolina, [michelle.underhill@dncr.nc.gov](mailto:michelle.underhill@dncr.nc.gov)
3. Guy Lamolinara, head of the Center for the Book in the Library of Congress, [glam@loc.gov](mailto:glam@loc.gov)





North Carolina  
**humanities**

**NORTH CAROLINA  
READS**

Program  
Guide

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# WELCOME

# I

Thank you for participating in **North Carolina Reads**, North Carolina Humanities' statewide book club in 2023!

The five selected books feature stories of American perseverance and diversity. These books were chosen by North Carolina Humanities because they explore issues of racial, social, and gender equality and the history and culture of North Carolina. The people, places, and events in the books also pose critical questions about how North Carolinians view their role in helping to form a more just and inclusive society. North Carolina Humanities hopes these stories encourage engaging, productive conversation among participants.

At the heart of North Carolina Reads is North Carolina Humanities' desire to connect communities through shared reading experiences. Reading is important because it helps us develop our critical-thinking skills; strengthens our minds, vocabulary, and mental health; and creates opportunities for us to empathize with others' stories and experiences.

As part of North Carolina Reads, North Carolina Humanities has distributed free books and resources across North Carolina, including to your group.

Beyond reading the books individually or communally, North Carolina Humanities strongly encourages groups to create a plan and host a reading program, book discussion, or other North Carolina Reads-related events in their community to further the impact of the book titles and create opportunities to come together to talk and listen.

In the pages ahead, you'll find a variety of ideas and suggestions to help guide you as you plan for a North Carolina Reads book discussion for your community!

Happy reading!

# II

# 2023 PROGRAM

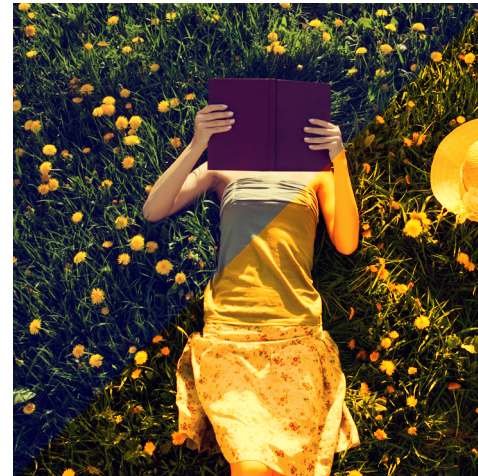
Throughout 2023, North Carolina Humanities is supporting groups across the state to read and create programs inspired by the North Carolina Reads book series.

Using the books and other resources provided by North Carolina Humanities (NC Humanities), your group will:

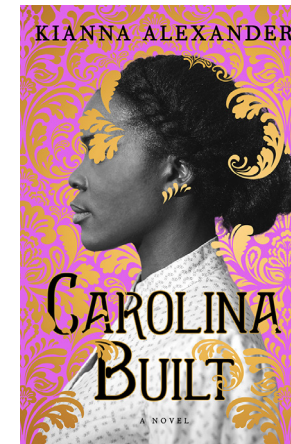
- Distribute the books received from NC Humanities to participants in your community.
- Implement a reading of one or more of the selected titles in their entirety. Participants may read the book individually or communally as is determined appropriate for your group.
- Implement one book discussion or one community book event. Please note, reading events can be held in virtual or in-person formats as best suits the needs of your community.

The read in each community may look a little different depending on the book(s) selected and what format your book event takes!

NC Humanities encourages everyone to share their North Carolina Reads story! Please engage with us on social media @NCHumanities and complete the feedback and final survey, found at [nchumanities.org](https://www.nchumanities.org).



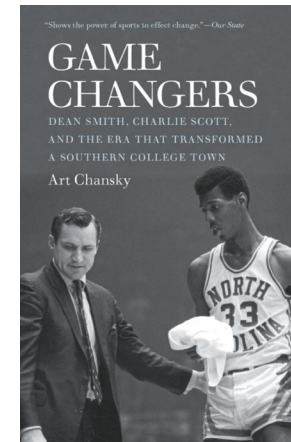
## 2023 North Carolina Reads Books



**FEBRUARY 2023**

### **CAROLINA BUILT** BY KIANNA ALEXANDER

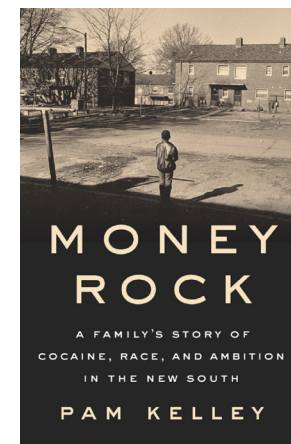
**Historical Fiction.** A story based on Josephine N. Leary, a real-life American entrepreneur who was emancipated in 1865. Leary is determined to build a life of her own and a future for her family. When she moves to Edenton, North Carolina, from the plantation where she was born, she is free, newly married, and ready to follow her dreams.



**MARCH 2023**

### **GAME CHANGERS: DEAN SMITH, CHARLIE SCOTT, AND THE ERA THAT TRANSFORMED A SOUTHERN COLLEGE TOWN** BY ART CHANSKY

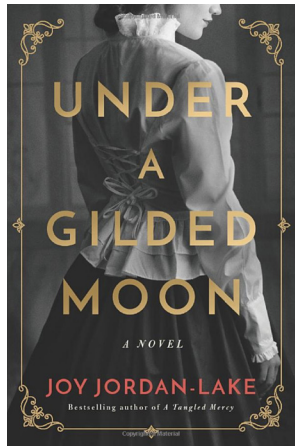
**Nonfiction.** Drawn together by college basketball in a time of momentous change, Dean Smith and Charlie Scott helped transform a university, a community, and the racial landscape of sports in the South.



**APRIL 2023**

### **MONEY ROCK: A FAMILY'S STORY OF COCAINE, RACE, AND AMBITION IN THE NEW SOUTH** BY PAM KELLEY

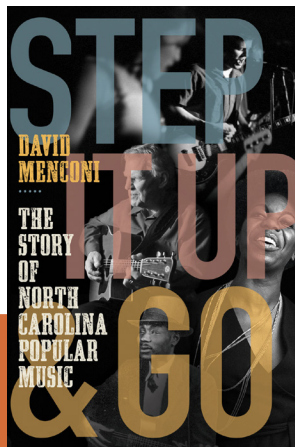
**Nonfiction.** The story of Belton Lamont Platt, nicknamed Money Rock, and of a striving African American family, swept up and transformed by the 1980s cocaine epidemic. This gripping tale, populated with characters both big-hearted and flawed, shows how social forces and public policies—racism, segregation, the War on Drugs, mass incarceration—help shape individual destinies.



MAY 2023

***UNDER A GILDED MOON***  
**BY JOY JORDAN-LAKE**

**Historical Fiction.** Kerry MacGregor's future is derailed when, after two years in college in New York City, family obligations call her home to the beautiful Appalachians. As Kerry finds herself caught in a war between wealth and poverty, innocence and corruption, she must navigate not only her own pride and desperation to survive but also the temptations of fortune and the men who control it.



JUNE 2023

***STEP IT UP AND GO: THE STORY OF NORTH CAROLINA POPULAR MUSIC***  
**BY DAVID MENCONI**

**Nonfiction.** This book is a love letter to the artists, scenes, and sounds defining North Carolina's extraordinary contributions to American popular music. Menconi shows how working-class roots and rebellion tie North Carolina's Piedmont blues, jazz, and bluegrass to beach music, rock, hip-hop, and more.

# PLANNING AN EVENT

## III

Consider planning book discussions with others to explore themes and share perspectives.

### Timing

Plan between 60-90 minutes for the discussion. This will be just long enough to get into the book, but short enough to keep everyone's attention. Discussions on virtual platforms can be shorter in length than in-person discussions.

### Sample Outline

**Introductions:** 5-10 minutes

Have all participants and the facilitator introduce themselves by saying their name. Keep introductions short so that you have ample time for discussion.

**Discussion:** 45-60 minutes

Plan to have 10-15 questions ready for discussion. Carefully consider your first question as it will set the tone for the discussion. Sample questions can be found on the pages following.

**Break:** 10 minutes

Typically used during an in-person discussion, allow participants 5-10 minutes to stretch, access bathrooms, or recharge with some refreshments.

**Conclusion:** 5-10 minutes

Thank the participants for talking with each other and for sharing their perspectives and considering new ones.

# IV

# FACILITATING

## Tips to help prepare for leading a discussion

### Set Guidelines

It is important to set guidelines at the start of the discussion. Some important ones:

1. All perspectives are valued, and it's important to hear from everyone in the room.
2. Share personal experiences rather than general statements about groups of people.
3. It's okay to disagree respectfully.

### Navigating Challenges

Consider the following:

- Help control interruptions by asking the participant to “hold that thought so we can hear it again once X is finished speaking.”
- Help ensure that each participant who wishes to speak is heard by saying, “That’s an interesting point. Did anyone else feel the same or differently?” or “Let’s hear from another reader.”
- Help defuse conversations by reminding participants to focus on content and ideas, not people. Defuse with a calm remark, and get back on track by saying, “Let’s get back to the end of chapter X. What did you think at this point?” or “I have a question about p. #. What is really going on here?”
- Help reluctant participants by asking what they may have liked or disliked about the book. If they were unable to finish the book, they could still participate in answering this question.
- Scan the room for verbal and nonverbal cues: Are people feeling comfortable? Are there shy people who look like they want to talk but just need to be asked?
- Avoid sharing what you think, even when people ask. Your role is to lead the conversation. Always turn the discussion back to the participants.

### Asking Questions

Always ask open-ended questions that can be answered in a variety of ways. Use specific moments or quotes from the book to ground the discussion, but avoid questions that require a lot of background information.

Tie your first question to a major theme or idea you’ll explore in the rest of the discussion, or start with a question based in the text. Pick an interesting quote or scene, read it together, then ask your question.

Ask a mix of interpretative and evaluative questions.

**Interpretative:** questions about the meaning of the text

- Why did this character do X?
- What did this character mean when they said Y?

**Evaluative:** questions that explore values and implications

- Is this character responsible for their actions?

*Sample questions can be found on the following page.*

### Finding a Facilitator

Great discussions start with their facilitators. If feasible, consider having a professional facilitator for your book discussion.

Your facilitator should be a great listener who makes others feel comfortable talking about big ideas. Facilitators should understand your goals for the discussion and commit to using the guidelines in this program guide.

If you are not using an in-house facilitator, it is recommended to find a local humanities or literary expert to facilitate your discussion. You could also try contacting English department faculty at a nearby college or university or reaching out to your local librarians.

Since it’s a good amount of work to read, plan, and lead a discussion, it is recommended to pay your facilitator. How much you want to pay your facilitator is up to you. Typically, a standard range for facilitation is \$100 to \$150 per book discussion session. If your facilitator forgoes payment, count what you would have paid them as an in-kind match using the form on page 13.

## Sample Questions

These questions are the focal point of North Carolina Reads. You can start to shape your book discussion/book event around a few of these questions. The questions below do not have a “correct” answer but instead are large, overarching questions at the heart of the important issues raised by these books. Please find text-dependent questions for each book in our separate Reading Schedule and Discussion Questions Guide.

- How are people transformed through their relationships with others?
- How do people make decisions about their economic livelihood?
- What does it mean to “make a living”?
- What aspects of our lives does social class influence?
- How does society express gender expectations, and how are they met or challenged?
- How have gender and women’s roles changed over time and in relation to political and social events?
- What are the benefits and consequences of questioning or challenging social order?
- What are the responsibilities of an individual regarding issues of social justice?
- How can literature serve as a vehicle for social change?
- How do sports, entertainment, and society interact?



# PROGRAM CREDITS

Find a full list of general communication guidelines, tips, and more at [NCHumanities.org](https://www.nchumanities.org).

## Description

**When describing North Carolina Reads, please use the standard description:**

North Carolina Humanities' North Carolina Reads is a statewide book club exploring issues of racial, social, and gender equality and the history and culture of North Carolina. North Carolina Humanities is a statewide nonprofit and affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities. Any views, findings, conclusions, opinions, or recommendations expressed do not necessarily represent those of NC Humanities or the National Endowment for the Humanities.

## Crediting

North Carolina Humanities and the National Endowment for the Humanities must be acknowledged as sponsors.

Please use the following credit lines, the North Carolina Humanities logo, and the National Endowment for the Humanities logo on anything produced. Logos may be no smaller than 5 points and may be accessed at [nchumanities.org](https://www.nchumanities.org) or from the press kit on our website.

### PRINT / SIGNAGE / WEBSITES

*"This [program/book event/discussion] is supported by North Carolina Humanities, an affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities, [nchumanities.org](https://www.nchumanities.org)."*

### PROGRAMS / PUBLIC GATHERINGS

*"This [program/book event/discussion] is part of North Carolina Humanities' statewide book club, North Carolina Reads. North Carolina Reads was created by North Carolina Humanities and is funded in part by the National Endowment for the Humanities. Learn more at [nchumanities.org](https://www.nchumanities.org)."*

### BOOK TITLES

Book titles should always be italicized when talking about the actual book (unless in a press release, which follows AP style). Book descriptions can be found on page 3.

# RESOURCES

One-click access to additional information

## Authors (In alphabetical order)

- Kianna Alexander: [authorkiannaalexander.wordpress.com](https://www.authorkiannaalexander.wordpress.com)
- Art Chansky: [us.macmillan.com/author/artchansky](https://us.macmillan.com/author/artchansky)
- Joy Jordan-Lake: [joyjordanlake.com](https://www.joyjordanlake.com)
- Pam Kelley: [pamelakelley.com](https://www.pamelakelley.com)
- David Menconi: [davidmenconi.com](https://www.davidmenconi.com)

## About North Carolina Humanities

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## About National Endowment for the Humanities

Created in 1965 as an independent federal agency, the National Endowment for the Humanities is one of the largest funders of humanities programs in the United States. Additional information about the National Endowment for the Humanities and its grant programs is available at [neh.gov](https://www.neh.gov).

## About the NC Center for the Book

The North Carolina Center for the Book is a collection of North Carolina Humanities' literature and reading programs. Using a variety of formats and initiatives, North Carolina Center for the Book literary programs celebrate and promote the vital importance of books, reading, libraries, and North Carolina's literary heritage. The North Carolina Center for the Book, [nchumanities.org](https://www.nchumanities.org), is the state affiliate of the National Center for the Book in the Library of Congress and is supported in part by the State Library of North Carolina, [statelibrary.ncdcr.gov](https://www.statelibrary.ncdcr.gov).



# COST SHARE

Thank you for the time and effort you took to help host a North Carolina Reads book program!

North Carolina Humanities ensures free access to public humanities programs. We would not be able to do this without the generous contributions and documentation of cost share from our local program partners like you. Below, please see how to track these cost-share contributions.

In your final North Carolina Reads survey, you will be asked to show the expenses for this project as contributed by your group. Expenses can be contributed in two ways: cash and in kind. Please capture the total for each expense type.

Expense Type	Cash	In-Kind
Value of Volunteer or Administrative Time	\$	\$
Value of Venue Space	\$	\$
Printing, Publicity, and Advertising	\$	\$
Refreshments	\$	\$
Facilitator Honorarium (Book discussion event)	\$	\$
Other	\$	\$
Cash and In-Kind Totals	\$	\$
<b>Total Amount Contributed</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>

\_\_\_\_\_  
Host Coordinator or Authorized Personnel Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

“Cash” means a contribution by your group (“cost share”) by paying for publicity, printing, refreshments, facilitator honorarium, paid staff time etc. Cash contributions are the “out-of-pocket” expenses. “In Kind” means a contribution by your group (“cost share”) in a form other than money or for a service that is donated. This can include, but is not limited to, the value of the space or venue provided; materials and equipment provided; and volunteer time spent distributing books, planning an event, and implementing an event. If you have questions, please call our office at (704) 687-1520.



North Carolina Humanities is a statewide nonprofit and affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH). Any views, findings, conclusions, opinions, or recommendations expressed by our partners and participants do not necessarily represent those of North Carolina Humanities or the National Endowment for the Humanities. This Guide may be used with permission from North Carolina Humanities.

Please note that selected books are intended for readers 18 and over and may not be suitable for some audiences.

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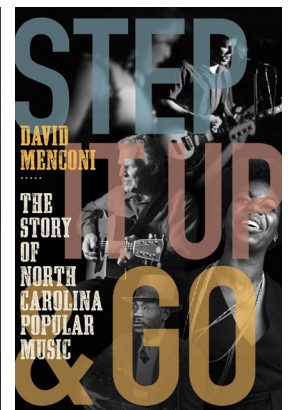
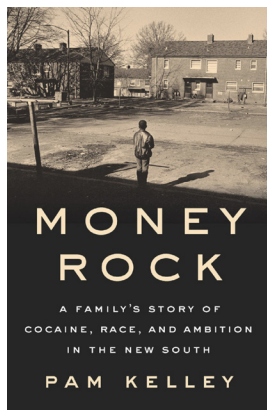
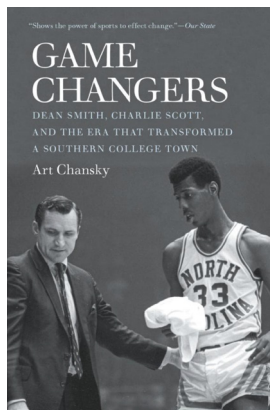
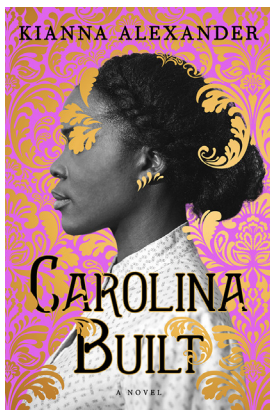
# NORTH CAROLINA READS | READING SCHEDULE & DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

North Carolina Humanities' 2023 statewide book club, North Carolina Reads, features five books that explore issues of racial, social, and gender equality and the history and culture of North Carolina.

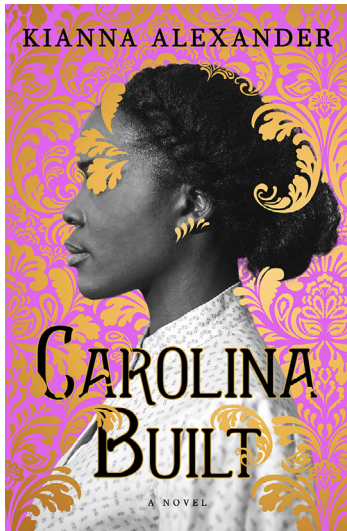
North Carolina Humanities hopes these stories encourage engaging, productive conversation among participants. At the heart of North Carolina Reads is North Carolina Humanities' desire to connect communities through shared reading experiences.

As part of North Carolina Reads, North Carolina Humanities is hosting monthly book club events where participants will hear from guest speakers, including book authors and topic experts, and have a chance to ask questions about the month's book.

Here, we offer a reading schedule and provide sample discussion questions to ask yourself and talk with others about as you read. For ideas on how to plan a book club discussion event, please view our companion Program Guide.



# FEBRUARY 2023



## *Carolina Built*

BY KIANNA ALEXANDER

### READING SCHEDULE

February 1-8 .....pages 1-112  
February 9-15.....pages 113-202  
February 16-22 .....pages 203-305

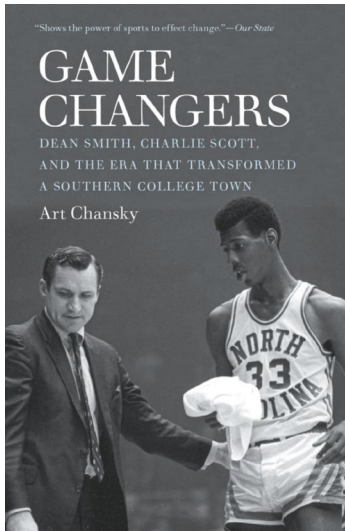
### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- After Josephine Leary was emancipated in 1865, she began her life as a newlywed in Edenton, North Carolina and quickly focused on building her and her family's legacy. Why is the idea of creating a legacy, especially one based on financial security and independence, important to Josephine?
- How does the novel explore the intersection of race and social class, specifically in terms of Josephine and Sweetie purchasing land, building a house, and opening a business?
- What is the importance of exploring the themes of family and motherhood in the book? What parenting practices of Josephine's might have set her apart from other mothers of her time?
- Josephine delivers a presentation on social roles of the modern woman at the Edenton Ladies Auxiliary meeting. What are the reactions of the meeting attendees to Josephine's presentation, and how do those reactions highlight the differences in expectations for women in the 1860s?
- The author details the development of a friendship between Josephine and Rosa. What do you think about their relationship?
- Throughout the book, Josephine and Sweetie experience several instances of racism and injustice. What do you think about Josephine's reactions to these situations?
- After reading this book, did you come away with a greater understanding of what this particular time and place in history was like through Josephine's experiences as imagined in the novel?
- What lessons can you apply from Josephine's experiences to your own life?

Questions adapted from Simon and Schuster



# MARCH 2023



## ***Game Changers: Dean Smith, Charlie Scott, and the Era That Transformed a Southern College Town***

**BY ART CHANSKY**

### **READING SCHEDULE**

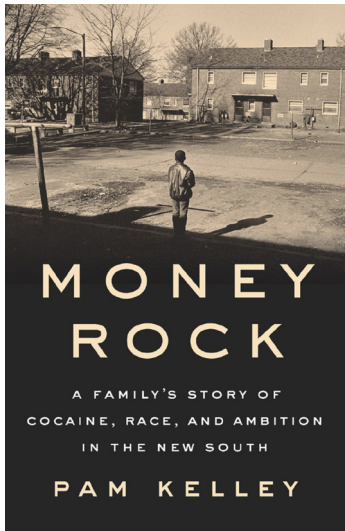
March 1-8 .....	pages 1-40
March 9-15.....	pages 41-85
March 16-22 .....	pages 86-125
March 23-27.....	pages 126-172

### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

- In what ways did Dean Smith’s and Charlie Scott’s experiences before they arrived at UNC Chapel Hill shape and influence their respective lives?
- In Chapter Two “The Truth About Chapel Hill” the author notes that, “The University of North Carolina’s reputation as a progressive institution originated in many places and was closely linked to Chapel Hill’s standing as a liberal college town.” To what extent was this an accurate/inaccurate perception in the 1950s and 1960s?
- How did Dean Smith and Charlie Scott overcome personal and professional challenges they faced both on and off the court?
- What were Dean Smith’s and Charlie Scott’s individual and collective achievements during their time together at UNC Chapel Hill? After? What do you think was the most significant achievement and why?
- In what ways were UNC Chapel Hill, the town of Chapel Hill, and collegiate athletics transformed by Dean Smith and Charlie Scott?



# APRIL 2023



## ***Money Rock: A Family's Story of Cocaine, Race, and Ambition in the New South***

BY PAM KELLEY

### **READING SCHEDULE**

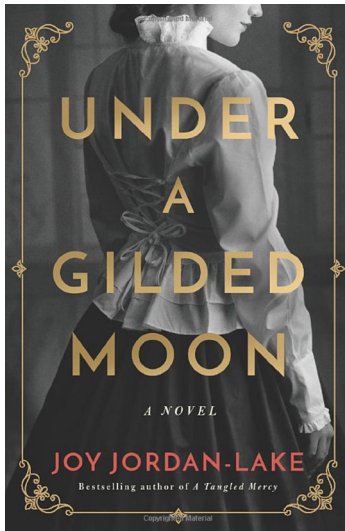
April 1-7 .....	pages 1-71
April 8-14 .....	pages 73-129
April 15-21 .....	pages 131-185
April 22-25 .....	pages 187-268

### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

- Describe Belton Lamont Platt's early life and adolescence growing up in Charlotte. How were Belton's experiences similar to and different from his mother, Carrie's, experiences? How were they different to his own children's experiences growing up in Charlotte a generation later?
- What historical factors, practices, and policies influenced Charlotte's economic and social development since the Civil War? How did these factors shape the city of Charlotte and its residents' lives?
- What were the implications of cocaine culture and the sale of cocaine on the United States, and on North Carolina, from the drug's introduction in the early 20th century through the 1990s?
- How did Belton's experiences in the state and federal prison system change his life?
- What are the larger social and economic implications of the criminal court system and mass incarceration? Consider Belton's trial and sentencing with "Maximum Bob" and Judge Shirley Fulton's courtroom experiences from Chapter 14 "Sentencing a Generation".
- What is the intersection between affordable housing and economic mobility?



# MAY 2023



## *Under a Gilded Moon*

BY JOY JORDAN-LAKE

### READING SCHEDULE

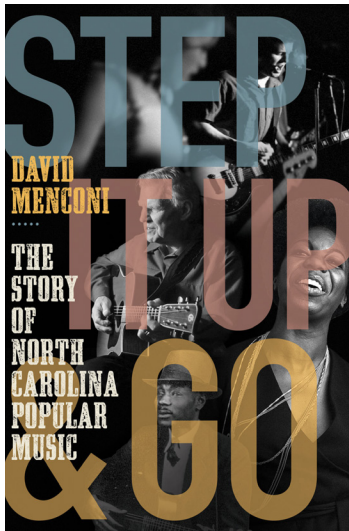
May 1-7.....	pages 1-102
May 8-14.....	pages 103-196
May 15-21.....	pages 197-297
May 22-31.....	pages 298-391

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What cultural elements are often associated with Appalachia and Western North Carolina? How are these cultural elements viewed by various characters throughout the book?
- As evidenced in the book, how was the economy transformed in the decades following the Civil War? Consider impacts of railroad construction, labor practices, tourism, etc.
- Compare and contrast the lives of the various characters in the book. How are their experiences illustrative of the economic inequality characteristic of the Gilded Age?
- What are some examples of cultural debates highlighted in the book? How did these cultural debates reinforce and/or challenge the social order?
- What were the various reactions to immigration and immigrants in the novel?
- How were women's roles changing during the Gilded Age?



# JUNE 2023



## *Step It Up and Go: The Story of North Carolina Popular Music*

BY DAVID MENCONI

### READING SCHEDULE

June 1-8 .....	pages 1-75
June 9-16 .....	pages 76-142
June 17-23 .....	pages 143-216
June 24-30 .....	pages 217-286

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- North Carolina has a national reputation as a musical state. What are the various kinds of music you can find throughout the state? Is there a particular style of music or musician you associate with North Carolina?
- What factors contributed to the development of so many different styles and genres of music in North Carolina?
- How does North Carolina music reflect cultural and social influences over time?
- What kinds of contributions did artists in North Carolina make in their musical careers?
- Why do some songs and artists remain relevant and popular across generations?
- What is your favorite North Carolina music genre, artist, or song?







# NORTH CAROLINA READS

## Reading Schedule & Discussion Questions

Please note that selected books are intended for readers 18 and over and may not be suitable for some audiences.

Any views, findings, conclusions, opinions, or recommendations expressed by our partners and participants do not necessarily represent those of North Carolina Humanities or the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Through public humanities programs and grantmaking, North Carolina Humanities connects North Carolinians with cultural experiences that spur dialogue, deepen human connections, and inspire community. North Carolina Humanities is a statewide nonprofit and affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities.

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# NORTH CAROLINA READS

Program  
Guide

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	<b>I.</b>	<b>Welcome</b>	Page 1
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# WELCOME

# I

Thank you for participating in North Carolina Reads, North Carolina Humanities' statewide book club for 2022!

The five selected books feature stories of American perseverance and diversity. These books were chosen by North Carolina Humanities because they explore issues of racial, social, and gender equality and the history and culture of North Carolina. The people, places, and events in the books also pose critical questions about how North Carolinians view their role in helping to form a more just and inclusive society. North Carolina Humanities hopes these stories encourage engaging, productive conversation among participants.

At the heart of North Carolina Reads is North Carolina Humanities' desire to connect communities through shared reading experiences. Reading is important because it helps us develop our critical-thinking skills; strengthens our minds, vocabulary, and mental health; and creates opportunities for us to empathize with others' stories and experiences.

As part of North Carolina Reads, North Carolina Humanities has distributed free books and resources across North Carolina, including to your group.

Beyond reading the books individually or communally, North Carolina Humanities strongly encourages groups to create a plan and host a reading program, book discussion, or other North Carolina Reads-related event in their community to further the impact of the book titles and create opportunities to come together to talk and listen.

In the pages ahead, you'll find a variety of ideas and suggestions to help guide you as you plan for a North Carolina Reads book discussion for your community!

Happy reading!

# 2022 PROGRAM

Throughout 2022, NC Humanities is supporting groups across the state to read and create programs inspired by the North Carolina Reads book series.

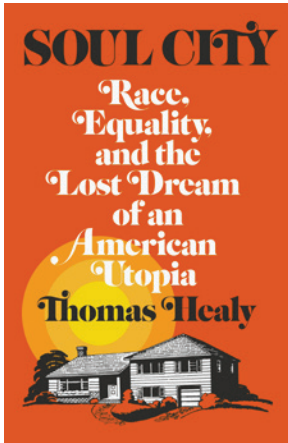
Using the books and other resources provided by North Carolina Humanities, your group will:

- Distribute the books received from North Carolina Humanities to participants in your community.
- Implement a reading of one or more of the selected titles in their entirety. Participants may read the book individually or communally as is determined appropriate for your group.
- Implement one book discussion or one community book event. Please note, reading events can be held in virtual or in-person formats as best suits the needs of your community.

The read in each community may look a little different depending on the book(s) selected and what format your book event takes.



## 2022 Books

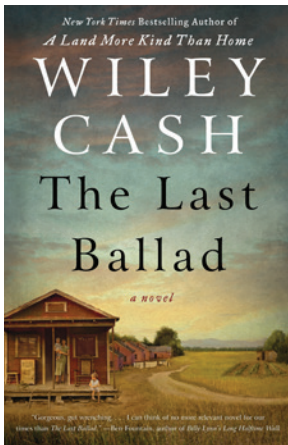


FEBRUARY 2022

### ***SOUL CITY: RACE, EQUALITY, AND THE LOST DREAM OF AN AMERICAN UTOPIA***

**BY THOMAS HEALY**

**Nonfiction.** In a gripping, poignant narrative, acclaimed author Thomas Healy resurrects this forgotten saga of race, capitalism, and the struggle for equality. Was it an impossible dream from the beginning? Or a brilliant idea thwarted by prejudice and ignorance? And how might America be different today if Soul City had been allowed to succeed?

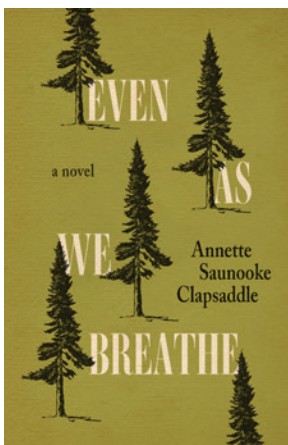


MARCH 2022

### ***THE LAST BALLAD***

**BY WILEY CASH**

**Historical Fiction.** Intertwining myriad voices, Wiley Cash brings to life the heartbreak and bravery of the now-forgotten struggle of the labor movement in early twentieth-century America—and pays tribute to the thousands of heroic women and men who risked their lives to win basic rights for all workers.



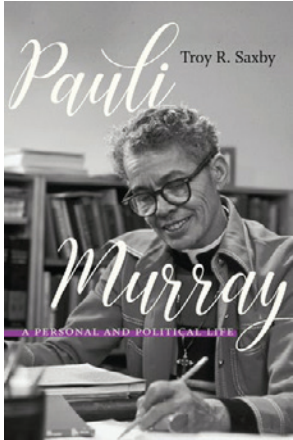
APRIL 2022

### ***EVEN AS WE BREATHE***

**BY ANNETTE SAUNOOKE CLAPSADDLE**

**Historical Fiction.** Nineteen-year-old Cowney Sequoyah yearns to escape his hometown of Cherokee, North Carolina, in the heart of the Smoky Mountains. When a summer job at Asheville's luxurious Grove Park Inn and Resort brings him one step closer to escaping the hills that both cradle and suffocate him, he sees it as an opportunity.

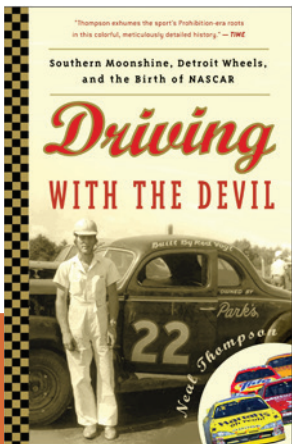
**MAY 2022**



***PAULI MURRAY: A PERSONAL AND POLITICAL LIFE***  
**BY TROY R. SAXBY**

**Nonfiction Biography.** Raised in Durham, the Rev. Dr. Anna Pauline “Pauli” Murray (1910–1985) was a trailblazing social activist, writer, lawyer, civil rights organizer, and campaigner for gender rights. In this intimate biography, Troy Saxby provides the most comprehensive account of Murray’s inner life to date, revealing her struggles in poignant detail and deepening our understanding and admiration of her numerous achievements in the face of pronounced racism, homophobia, transphobia, and political persecution.

**JUNE 2022**



***DRIVING WITH THE DEVIL: SOUTHERN MOONSHINE,  
DETROIT WHEELS, AND THE BIRTH OF NASCAR***  
**BY NEAL THOMPSON**

**Nonfiction.** The true story behind NASCAR’s moonshine-fueled origins. Long before the sport of stock-car racing existed, young men in the rural, Depression-wracked South learned that cars and speed were tickets to a better life. With few options beyond farm or factory, the best chance of escape was running moonshine.

# PLANNING AN EVENT

## III

Consider planning book discussions with others to explore themes and share perspectives.

### Timing

Plan between 60-90 minutes for the discussion. This will be just long enough to get into the book, but short enough to keep everyone's attention. Discussions on virtual platforms can be shorter in length than in-person discussions.

### Sample Outline

#### **Introductions:** 5-10 minutes

Have all participants and the facilitator introduce themselves by saying their name. Keep introductions short so that you have ample time for discussion.

#### **Discussion:** 40-60 minutes

Plan to have 10-15 questions ready for discussion. Carefully consider your first question as it will set the tone for the discussion. Sample questions can be found on the pages following.

#### **Break:** 10 minutes

Typically used during an in-person discussion, allow participants 5-10 minutes to stretch, access bathrooms, or recharge with some refreshments.

#### **Conclusion:** 5-10 minutes

Thank the participants for exchanging in discourse with each other and for sharing their perspectives and considering new perspectives.



# FACILITATING

## Tips to help prepare for leading a discussion

### Set Guidelines

It is important to set guidelines at the start of the discussion. Some important ones:

1. All perspectives are valued, and it's important to hear from everyone in the room.
2. Share personal experiences rather than general statements about groups of people.
3. It's okay to disagree respectfully.

### Navigating Challenges

Consider the following:

- Help control interruptions by asking the participant to “hold that thought so we can hear it again once X is finished speaking.”
- Help ensure that each participant who wishes to speak is heard by saying, “That’s an interesting point. Did anyone else feel the same or differently?” or “Let’s hear from another reader.”
- Help defuse conversations by reminding participants to focus on content and ideas, not people. Defuse with a calm remark, and get back on track by saying, “Let’s get back to the end of chapter X. What did you think at this point?” or “I have a question about p. #. What is really going on here?”
- Help reluctant participants by asking what they may have liked or disliked about the book. If they were unable to finish the book, they could still participate in answering this question.
- Scan the room for verbal and nonverbal cues: Are people feeling comfortable? Are there shy people who look like they want to talk but just need to be asked?
- Avoid sharing what you think, even when people ask. Your role is to lead the conversation. Always turn the discussion back to the participants.



## Asking Questions

Always ask open-ended questions that can be answered in a variety of ways. Use specific moments or quotes from the book to ground the discussion, but avoid questions that require a lot of background information.

Tie your first question to a major theme or idea you'll explore in the rest of the discussion, or start with a question based in the text. Pick an interesting quote or scene, read it together, then ask your question.

Ask a mix of interpretative and evaluative questions.

**Interpretative:** questions about the meaning of the text

- Why did this character do X?
- What did this character mean when they said Y?

**Evaluative:** questions that explore values and implications

- Is this character responsible for their actions?

*Sample questions can be found on the following page.*

## Finding a Facilitator

Great discussions start with their facilitators. If feasible, consider having a professional facilitator for your book discussion.

Your facilitator should be a great listener who makes others feel comfortable talking about big ideas. Facilitators should understand your goals for the discussion and commit to using the guidelines in this discussion guide.

If you are not using an in-house facilitator, it is recommended to find a local humanities scholar to facilitate your discussion. You could also try contacting English department faculty at a nearby college or university or reaching out to your local librarians.

Since it's a good amount of work to read, plan, and lead the discussion, it is recommended to pay your facilitator. How much you want to pay your facilitator is up to you. Typically, a standard range for facilitation is \$100 to \$150 per book discussion session. If your facilitator forgoes payment, count what you would have paid them as an in-kind match using the form on page 13.

## Sample Questions

These questions are the focal point of North Carolina Reads. You can start to shape your book discussion/book event around a few of these questions. The questions below do not have a “correct” answer but instead are large, overarching questions at the heart of the important issues raised by these books. For host groups planning a book discussion, please find text-dependent questions for each book in our Reading Schedule and Discussion Questions Guide.

- What are the roles and responsibilities of citizens and government in a democratic society?
- How do personal and civic responsibilities differ?
- How does civic engagement shape American democracy?
- What is the relationship between justice and citizenship?
- How are military service and citizenship linked?
- How do people make decisions about their economic livelihood?
- Why do people work? Should everyone be expected to work?
- What does it mean to “make a living?”
- What cultural elements are often associated with Western North Carolina and with the larger region of Appalachia?
- What cultural traits do “outsiders” use to form a perception about a person? A community? A region? How do we navigate cultural differences?
- How has the constitution grown and changed since its creation?
- How does society express gender expectations, and how are they met or challenged?
- How have gender and women’s roles changed over time and in relation to political and social events?
- What are the benefits and consequences of questioning or challenging social order?





# PROGRAM CREDITS

Find a full list of general communication guidelines, tips, and more at [NCHumanities.org](https://www.nchumanities.org).

## Description

**When describing North Carolina Reads, please use the standard description:**

North Carolina Humanities' North Carolina Reads is a statewide book club exploring issues of racial, social, and gender equality and the history and culture of North Carolina. North Carolina Humanities is a statewide nonprofit and affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities. Any views, findings, conclusions, opinions, or recommendations expressed do not necessarily represent those of NC Humanities or the National Endowment for the Humanities.

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# RESOURCES

One-click access to additional information

## Authors (In alphabetical order)

- Wiley Cash: [wileycash.com](http://wileycash.com)
- Annette Saunooke Clapsaddle: [asaunookeclapsaddle.com](http://asaunookeclapsaddle.com)
- Thomas Healy: [us.macmillan.com/author/thomashealy](http://us.macmillan.com/author/thomashealy)
- Troy R. Saxby: [uncpress.org/author/125687-troy-r-saxby](http://uncpress.org/author/125687-troy-r-saxby)
- Neal Thompson: [nealthompson.com](http://nealthompson.com)

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# IN-KIND DONATIONS

Thank you for the time and effort you took to help host a North Carolina Reads book program!

North Carolina Humanities ensures free access to public humanities programs. We would not be able to do this without the generous contributions and documentation of cost share from our local program partners like you. Below, please see how to track these cost-share contributions.

In your final North Carolina Reads survey, you will be asked to show the expenses for this project as contributed by your group. Expenses can be contributed in two ways: cash and in kind. Please capture the total for each expense type.

Expense Type	Cash	In-Kind
Value of Volunteer or Administrative Time	\$	\$
Value of Venue Space	\$	\$
Printing, Publicity, and Advertising	\$	\$
Refreshments	\$	\$
Facilitator Honorarium (Book discussion event)	\$	\$
Other	\$	\$
Cash and In-Kind Totals	\$	\$
<b>Total Amount Contributed</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>

\_\_\_\_\_  
Host Coordinator or Authorized Personnel Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**“Cash”** means a contribution by your group (“cost share”) by paying for publicity, printing, refreshments, facilitator honorarium, paid staff time etc. Cash contributions are the “out-of-pocket” expenses. **“In Kind”** means a contribution by your group (“cost share”) in a form other than money or for a service that is donated. This can include, but is not limited to, the value of the space or venue provided; materials and equipment provided; and volunteer time spent distributing books, planning an event, and implementing an event.

If you have questions please call our office at (704) 687-1520.



North Carolina Reads is made possible in part by a special initiative grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities, “A More Perfect Union”.

North Carolina Humanities is a statewide nonprofit and affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH). Any views, findings, conclusions, opinions, or recommendations expressed by our partners and participants do not necessarily represent those of NC Humanities or the National Endowment for the Humanities. This Program Guide may be used with permission from North Carolina Humanities.

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# NORTH CAROLINA READS

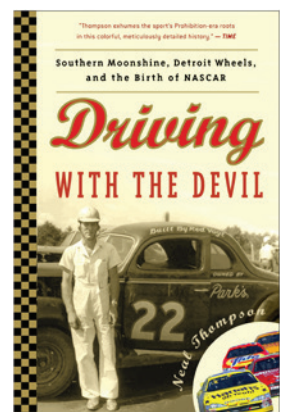
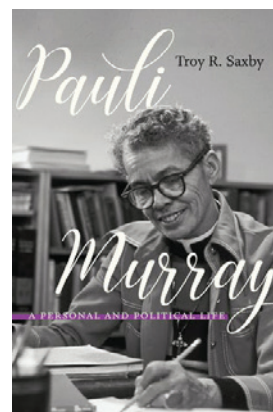
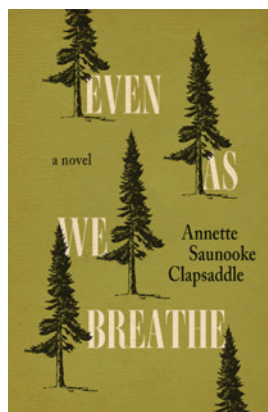
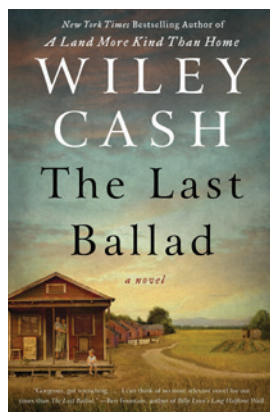
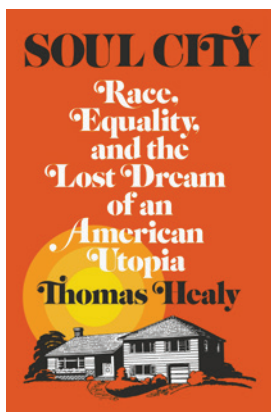
READING SCHEDULE &  
DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

North Carolina Humanities' 2022 statewide book club, North Carolina Reads, features five books that explore issues of racial, social, and gender equality and the history and culture of North Carolina.

North Carolina Humanities hopes these stories encourage engaging, productive conversation among participants. At the heart of North Carolina Reads is North Carolina Humanities' desire to connect communities through shared reading experiences.

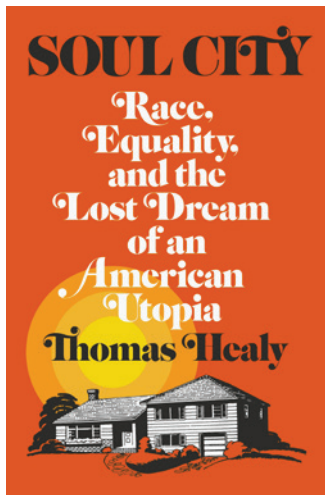
As part of North Carolina Reads, North Carolina Humanities is hosting monthly book club events where participants will hear from guest speakers, including book authors and topic experts, and have a chance to ask questions about the month's book.

Here, we offer a reading schedule and provide sample discussion questions to ask yourself and talk with others about as you read.





# FEBRUARY 2022



## *Soul City: Race, Equality, and the Lost Dream of an American Utopia*

BY THOMAS HEALY

### READING SCHEDULE

February 1-6 .....	pages 1-114
February 7-13 .....	pages 115-229
February 14-20 .....	pages 230-344

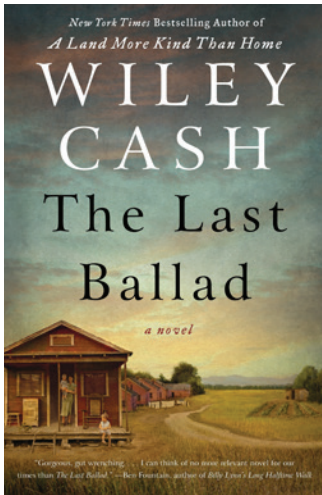
### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- In what ways did Floyd McKissick’s early life experiences and his work during the Civil Rights Era shape his idea to create the utopian community of Soul City?
- What were the impacts of urbanization on people living in America’s biggest cities? In what ways did this influence McKissick’s choice of location for Soul City? If Soul City had not been built in a rural area, would it have experienced a different outcome?
- How did the planning of Soul City benefit the surrounding areas and nearby communities?
- How were industrialization (or lack thereof) and the building of Soul City connected?
- Of all the obstacles that Floyd McKissick and Soul City faced, which do you think was most responsible for the project’s defeat?
- What can we learn from Soul City regarding future development and economic impact in both urban and rural areas?





# MARCH 2022



## ***The Last Ballad***

BY WILEY CASH

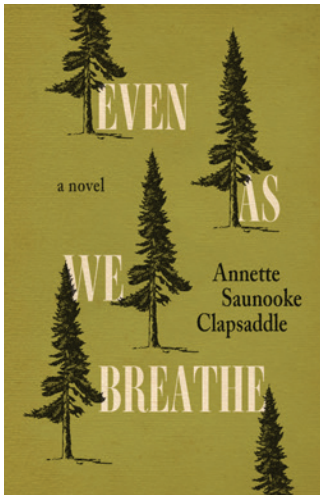
### **READING SCHEDULE**

March 1-6 .....	pages 1-87
March 7-13 .....	pages 88-200
March 14-20 .....	pages 201-300
March 21-27 .....	pages 301-370

### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

- What daily challenges did Ella May Wiggins face in struggling to provide for her family?
- Describe the working conditions of the mill. What recourse did workers have in defending themselves against unfair treatment?
- How did these conditions eventually lead to a workers' strike?
- How did the workers respond to Wiggins's songs at the rallies? How do music and history influence each other?
- Did the union leadership's political affiliations affect how the strike was viewed by the general public? (Note the reaction of the communities around Gastonia to the strikers as well as the reaction of lawmakers in Washington, D.C. when Ella May's group stops them on the street.)
- Even though the strike at Loray Mill was not successful, what impact did it have on the labor movement in the United States?
- Why do you think Cash decided to use the voices of Wiggins's daughter, the mill-owner's wife, a Pullman porter, and the old man who pulls the "dope wagon" to tell the story? What does each bring to the story that gives it a unique perspective?

# APRIL 2022



## ***Even As We Breathe***

BY ANNETTE SAUNOOKE CLAPSADDLE

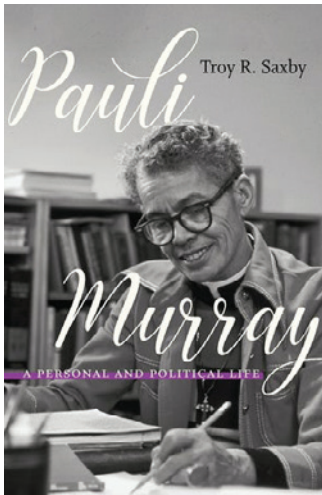
### **READING SCHEDULE**

April 4-10 .....	pages 1-76
April 11-17 .....	pages 77-160
April 18-24 .....	pages 161-230

### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

- Near the beginning of the novel, Cowney Sequoyah says, “Bones can teach.” What is the significance of bones in the story? What lessons do the bones teach?
- Cowney says, “For once in their lives, those Japanese Americans must have wished they were just Japanese in America.” Considering the experiences of Japanese Americans and prisoners of war, in what ways did the war challenge democratic traditions?
- How do you think Cowney feels about Cherokee, NC, his heritage, and his personal history? Does this change over the course of the novel?
- What is the importance of both physical and metaphoric boundaries in the novel?
- How does the novel explore the intersection of class and race for the Eastern Band of the Cherokee, residents of Asheville, and upper-class foreign diplomats in the story?
- In both world wars, Native Americans, African Americans, and Latinos joined the U.S. Army to fight. In what ways were they fighting for democracy on and off the battlefield?
- At the end of the book, Cowney and Lee go to town to see the Charlie Chaplin film *The Great Dictator*. Why does the film appeal to Cowney? How does the speech in the film more broadly relate to the book?

# MAY 2022



## ***Pauli Murray: A Personal and Political Life***

BY TROY R. SAXBY

### READING SCHEDULE

May 2-8 .....	pages 1-93
May 9-15 .....	pages 94-144
May 16-22 .....	pages 145-205
May 23-29 .....	pages 206-292

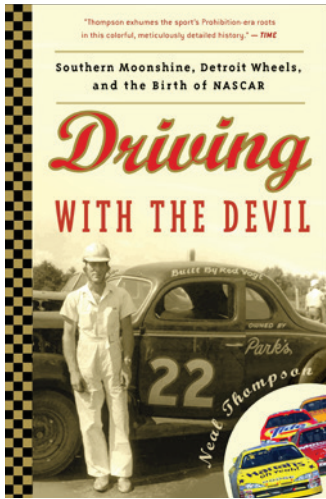
### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- How did Pauli's childhood experiences shape her life?
- What challenges did Pauli face with her identity in terms of gender and race? In what ways did she confront these challenges?
- What did Pauli mean when she used the term "Jane Crow?"
- How did Pauli participate in both the Civil Rights movement and the movement for women's rights? What were her accomplishments?
- Why did Pauli change careers and become an Episcopal priest later in life? To what extent was this work a continuation of her career?





# JUNE 2022



## *Driving with the Devil: Southern Moonshine, Detroit Wheels, and the Birth of NASCAR*

BY NEAL THOMPSON

### READING SCHEDULE

June 1-5 .....	pages 1-100
June 6-12.....	pages 101-193
June 13-19,.....	pages 194-294
June 20-26 .....	pages 295-366

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What is the cultural and economic history of moonshining in Appalachia?
- What hardships did the Great Depression bring to North Carolina? To the region of Appalachia? To the South?
- How is the history of NASCAR connected to the making and sale of illegal alcohol?
- What were some of the consequences of the 18th and the 21st amendments?
- How did World War II impact stock car racing and those involved with the sport? How did it impact spectator sports and popular cultural pastimes across America?
- What are your impressions of NASCAR's key founding figures (Bill France, Red Vogt, Raymond Parks, and Red Byron)?
- In the post-war decades, how did stock car racing and NASCAR evolve? In what ways did it remain the same?
- How would you characterize the history of NASCAR?



# NORTH CAROLINA READS

## Reading Schedule & Discussion Questions

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