NEW IN 2017
Explore compelling writing of the last 70 years, in the fields of music, film, and television in Big Ideas in Popular Culture

In 2017 the Great Books Foundation celebrates its 70th anniversary! Inspired by the vision of our founders, Robert Maynard Hutchins and Mortimer Adler, and their commitment to liberal education and lifelong learning, the Foundation has built nationwide school and community programs centered on discussion and civil discourse.

Since 1947, our wide-ranging publications and outreach have engaged millions of students, thousands of teachers, and generations of adult group members—and changed countless lives.

In 2017 we look forward to a year of innovative programs and publications, including collaborations with the Aspen Institute and the summer release of Big Ideas in Popular Culture, a trio of blockbuster anthologies on music, film, and television. In May we will host another Great Books Chicago weekend, and once again this summer we will be supporting the work of the Great Books Summer Program. Look for our monthly eNewsletters for updates on further celebratory events.

We are delighted that you are part of our Great Books community! We hope that you will continue to support our mission. We believe that the reading and discussion of great literature and great art is of the utmost importance. It builds a shared humanity—and gives us the opportunity to understand and engage with a world of different ideas, backgrounds, and perspectives. Shared Inquiry, our core methodology, expresses the democratic impulse, and its emphasis on critical thinking and collaboration empowers people of all ages to think not only for themselves, but also for the common good. What work could be more timely?

If you believe as we do that the mission of the Great Books Foundation is more important than ever, then please use this opportunity to support us with a tax-deductible donation. Your gift will sustain our programs as we plan for the next 70 years.

Thank you for your continued support, and please join with us in celebrating 70 years of making a difference!

Joseph P. Coulson
President, The Great Books Foundation
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Coming in Summer 2017!

Big Ideas in Popular Culture

The great ideas are all around us! Across music, film, and television, popular culture is a rich source of vibrant and provocative writing on ideas central to our modern world.

Arriving in our 70th anniversary year, these new anthologies of short stories, poems, memoirs, essays, and journalism will inspire lively discussion. The three volumes showcase some of the best writing on popular culture topics over the last 70 years, across many genres. Together as a boxed set or individually, these collections are thought-provoking, challenging, and engaging additions to the Great Books collection.

**Sound Bites selections include:**
- *Don’t You Wonder, Sometimes* Tracy K. Smith
- *Soul Survivor* David Remnick
- *Bop* Langston Hughes
- *A Poem for Ella Fitzgerald* Sonia Sanchez

**Double Features selections include:**
- *Matinée* Robert Coover
- *John Wayne: A Love Song* Joan Didion
- Selection from *Better Living Through Criticism* A. O. Scott
- *Thoughts On The Help* Roxane Gay

**Tube Talk selections include:**
- *The Great Divide* Emily Nussbaum
- *Brad Carrigan, American* George Saunders
- *The Revolution Will Not Be Televised* Gil Scott-Heron
- *The Moon Hours* E. B. White and reporters
Discussion questions include:

• What does Wilson mean when he writes that “the kind of contempt that’s mobilized by ‘cool’ taste is inimical . . . to an aesthetics that might support a good public life”?
• Why does Mamet say that the job of the film director is “to tell the story through the juxtaposition of uninflected images”?
• Why does Nadel say that watching television in the 1950s made one “the definitive citizen”?
• What does Critchley mean when he claims, “To turn yourself to face yourself is not to confront your authentic subjectivity”? 

Joan Didion
Author of “John Wayne: A Love Song,” which is included in Double Features: Big Ideas in Film.

Three-Book Boxed Set (Print)
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Behind the Pages

We created original black and white abstract artwork to symbolize the three areas of culture that these books explore. In Sound Bites a linear ink drawing is reminiscent of sound waves and vibrations; in Double Features a photograph of delicate paper strips is evocative of film and motion; and in Tube Talk overlapping planes of transparent paper rectangles are suggestive of shifting television screens. The corresponding slipcase borrows parts of each image, presented as circles sprinkled across all sides, as a visual celebration of great ideas overlapping and influencing each other.

—Anne Jordan and Mitch Goldstein
Cover designers of Big Ideas in Popular Culture
The selections in *Her Own Accord: American Women on Identity, Culture, and Community* explore the experiences, challenges, and achievements of women from a contemporary point of view.

Poetry, fiction, nonfiction, memoirs, and journalistic works are all included. Together, these selections and their accompanying discussion questions allow readers to explore how gender informs every aspect of a woman’s life, including self and identity, family, sex and relationships, work and creativity, and activism and politics.

**Selections include:**
- *Even the Queen* Connie Willis
- *The Box House and the Snow* Cristina Henríquez
- *Freedom Fighter* Perri Klass
- *One Out of Twelve: Writers Who Are Women in Our Century* Tillie Olsen
- *Drinking Coffee Elsewhere* ZZ Packer
- *Ways of Conquest* Denise Levertov

**Discussion questions include:**
- For “At Odds,” an essay by Julia Serano: Why does Serano believe her sexual orientation and becoming female are conflicting desires?
- For “Lowering Your Standards for Food Stamps,” a poem by Sheryl Luna: Why does the speaker say that she is “unlearning America’s languages”?

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**Her Own Accord**

Print: $24.95 • ADU-HOA

eBook: $9.95 • ADU-HOA-DE

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The questions that Mellody Hobson raises in her piece “Color Blind or Color Brave?” address some of the most important issues we face in America today. As she puts it, “It’s time for us to be comfortable with the uncomfortable conversation about race.” I think very few of us find such conversations easy or pleasant, so we avoid them and try to act “color blind.” This piece really helped me think about why being “color brave” is better, even though it’s difficult.

—Denise Ahlquist
Vice President of Professional Development
Dying in battle is a topic addressed by poets, it’s likely fair to say, for as long as there has been poetry. It makes no difference whether the soldier is fighting for Rome in the first century BC, as in Horace’s ode, or Great Britain in the twentieth, as in Owen’s gruesome lyric. The question remains whether his death has meaning beyond the simple, irrevocable fact of it. But, taken together, these two great poems also open a window onto a larger, eternal mystery—the meaning, if there is one, of any death, or of any life.

—Mike Levine
Great Books group participant, Chicago, IL
The selections in Imperfect Ideal: Utopian and Dystopian Visions illustrate the best and worst of what can happen when we attempt to mold the complex communities in which we live into our vision of a perfect state.

All 23 selections in this anthology challenge readers to question how society should be structured and governed, as well as what kinds of communities are most conducive to human fulfillment, both privately and in the civic arena.

Selections include:
• The Machine Stops  E. M. Forster
• Time  Riichi Yokomitsu
• Black Box  Jennifer Egan
• Selection from A New View of Society  Robert Owen
• Utopia  Wislawa Szymborska
• Selection from The City of God  Saint Augustine
• The Ones Who Walk Away from Omelas  Ursula K. Le Guin
• On the Cannibals  Michel de Montaigne
• Jon  George Saunders
• Selection from Utopia  Thomas More

Discussion questions for “Black Box,” a short story published initially as a series of tweets, by Jennifer Egan:
• Why does Egan envision a future where women’s bodies are recorders of data?
• Why are agents required to possess an “impossible combination of traits: iron-clad scruples and a willingness to violate them”?  

I read this book cover to cover when it first arrived, and enjoyed discussing selections at Great Books Chicago last April. Now, as my monthly group works its way through it, I find that some works are delightful old friends, while others bring the joy of new discovery. Ursula K. Le Guin’s “The Ones Who Walk Away from Omelas” provoked an animated discussion in Chicago that was repeated here in Oakland. Indeed, I suspect that any group would be spurred by it to hold a thoughtful and rewarding conversation about how societies wrestle with inequality.

—Rob Calvert, San Francisco Great Books Council
Immigrant Voices

Immigrant Voices: 21st Century Stories is a contemporary anthology of short stories written by recent immigrants to the United States.

This anthology engages readers with perennial questions about the relation of the individual to society. Eighteen short stories speak to the experiences, concerns, and aspirations of those who have left their homeland for a new life in the United States.

Including works by:
- Reese Okyong Kwon
- Aleksandar Hemon
- Porochista Khakpour
- Yiyun Li
- Daniel Alarcón
- Edwidge Danticat
- Junot Díaz
- Meena Alexander
- Emma Ruby-Sachs
- Lawrence La Fountain-Stokes
- Sefi Atta

Edwidge Danticat
Author of “Hot-Air Balloons”

Discussion questions include:
- What does the narrator mean when he says, “The grandiose illusion of the exile is that they are all back home, your enemies and your friends, voyeurs all, watching you”?
- Why might Mickey feel he is “unable to keep up with the demands of being here and there at the same time”?
- What does the father mean when he says to the narrator, “You’ve become American”?
- Why does Zichen see her life as a “life of flight”?
- Why does the narrator say that the migrant becomes “hostage” to something in her soul?
Discussion Group Favorites

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Science Series $24.95 each

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Introduction to Great Books $14.95 each

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Introduction to Great Books Leader’s Guides (ALG-I1, ALG-I2, and ALG-I3) are $6 each. Buy the full set of anthologies and Leader’s Guides (ADU-IGB) for just $54.70!

The Introduction to Great Books series has a fantastic mix of short fiction, philosophy, history, and psychology. “Rothschild’s Fiddle,” Chekhov’s masterwork in the first volume, is the most moving short story I’ve ever read.

—Dan Lindstrom
Marketing Coordinator

For more information on all of these titles, visit store.greatbooks.org/colleges-book-groups.html.
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Our Outreach Initiatives

It was a vast community engaged in the Great Conversation that Robert Maynard Hutchins and Mortimer Adler, cofounders of the Great Books Foundation, envisioned at the University of Chicago more than 70 years ago. *The Campaign to Ensure a Future of Readers and Thinkers* invites those who value the power of words and discussion to invest in lifelong learning to help create literate and engaged citizens and a more just and civil society.

**The Great Books Great Kids Fund** helped students at Chicago’s William H. Prescott Elementary School significantly improve their reading comprehension, critical thinking, and writing. The school, once in danger of failing, made a dramatic rebound and today the program serves students in every grade, K–8. Your support will help us provide training for teachers and materials for students in the most challenged communities.

**Finding a Room of One’s Own** supports young women through schools and community organizations that augment academic opportunities, career readiness, and life-crisis management. We help young women hone their reading and verbal skills and provide an open forum for the exploration of challenges they face. Your support will enable us to train discussion leaders, provide materials, and expand the program to serve young women in communities nationwide.
Talking Service

Now active in 17 states, **Talking Service** is our reading and discussion program for returning veterans. The program helps men and women of the armed forces work through the isolation, anger, and fear they often face in rebuilding their lives. Talking Service has the potential to expand into many more communities across the country. Your support will enable us to establish groups in all 50 states. **Find out more at greatbooks.org/giving/initiatives/talking-service/**.

**What is Talking Service?**

Talking Service discussions focus on short works of literature in *Standing Down: From Warrior to Civilian*, an anthology of classic and contemporary writings on military experience. Meeting in small groups led by trained facilitators, veterans talk with their peers about ideas and issues prompted by the shared readings and enriched by their own experiences.

Family members, friends, and caretakers of veterans also find that Talking Service discussions help them reflect together on many of the issues faced by the veterans in their lives. And all civilians, whether or not they have close personal connections to veterans, will find Talking Service discussions a stimulating way to think deeply about the values behind how we deploy our fellow citizens and our material resources in defense of the common good.

For more information about participating in Talking Service, visit [talkingservice.greatbooks.org](http://talkingservice.greatbooks.org).

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**I liked hearing the different perspectives of other veterans from other branches. I enjoyed getting together with them to discuss some of the challenges we face as we transition from military to civilian life.**

—Air Force veteran  
Student Veterans of America Program  
Florida International University

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New!

Great Books Plus

Great Books Plus is our new digital solution giving your high school and college discussion groups access to text management tools and analytics. Already available to students in our Junior Great Books program for grades K–5, the benefits of Great Books Plus will be coming to our adult readers later this year. Enjoy all the features and benefits of Great Books, plus so much more!

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For 70 years the Great Books Foundation has fostered respectful, open discussion that promotes civil discourse, civic engagement, and social justice. We empower students, teachers, parents, and volunteers. We build communities of lifelong learners. We are the Great Books Foundation. Help us build a more just and civil society.

Great Books has always been an integral part of my life. When I was a stay-at-home mom, Great Books provided me with an outlet where I could talk about issues beyond the mundane topics of child rearing and housekeeping. As a teacher and administrator, I always found that Great Books groups gave me greater insights into my students and colleagues than I would otherwise have had. Now, Great Books continues to provide me with exciting materials so I can exchange ideas about vital issues. It has also given me a cadre of like-minded individuals, many of whom have become my closest friends. Thank you.

—Helen Smith
Lifelong Great Books enthusiast, Austin, TX