

1st Wednesdays

Humanities Lecture Series

October 2018–May 2019

FREE PUBLIC TALKS

At Libraries around Vermont



**Vermont
Humanities**



A Vermont Humanities Council Program

1st Wednesdays

Hosted by nine libraries around Vermont

7:00 PM on first Wednesdays, October 2018 – May 2019

Statewide Underwriters:



This program is supported by the Institute of Museum and Library Services, a federal agency, through the Library Services and Technology Act as administered by the Vermont Department of Libraries.

The nine talks that are supported by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation in partnership with the Pulitzer Prizes are part of the “Democracy and the Informed Citizen” Initiative, which is administered by the Federation of State Humanities Councils. The initiative seeks to deepen the public’s knowledge and appreciation of the vital connections between democracy, the humanities, journalism, and an informed citizenry.

The five talks presented in partnership with Middlebury College and the Mellon Foundation are part of *Listening & Speaking in Public Spheres*, an initiative that calls upon students, faculty and the broader Middlebury, Vermont community to strengthen capacities for productive discourse in the public sphere by developing new tools for engagement.

The Vermont Humanities Council (VHC) is under grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH). Any views expressed in this program do not necessarily represent those of the NEH or VHC.

 **Vermont Humanities Council**
11 Loomis Street, Montpelier, Vermont 05602
vermonthumanities.org, 802.262.2626



CREDITS

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Brooks
Memorial
Library
802.254.5290
7:00 PM



A program of



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- Against the Grain
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- New Chapter
- The Richards Group
- Windham World Affairs Council

Brattleboro 1st Wednesdays

OCTOBER 3 • Anne Alstott

The Public Option

The size and role of government is an ongoing debate in the US. Big government began with Lincoln; it was essential to preserving the Union during the Civil War. Yale Law School professor Anne Alstott asks if there are challenges today best addressed by public solutions rather than private action.

NOVEMBER 7 • George Jaeger

The New World We Face: America Alone?

Veteran diplomat George Jaeger considers a world in which America chooses unilateral action but not leadership in the international community, which risks isolating the US from both allies and adversaries.

Underwriter: Chroma Technology

DECEMBER 5 • David Blight

Writing the Life of Frederick Douglass

Yale historian David Blight, author of a new biography of Frederick Douglass, tells Douglass's story: an escaped slave who became one of the leading abolitionists, orators, and writers of his era. Underwriter: Vermont Bar Association

JANUARY 2 • Julie Kalish

Finding Your Voice in 2019

For those with New Year's resolutions to write, or simply write more clearly, Dartmouth writing instructor Julie Kalish leads an interactive exploration of the principles of context, audience, tone, purpose, and message.

FEBRUARY 6 • Tim Spears

The Making of *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*

Middlebury professor Tim Spears looks at the 1941 publication of *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*. Depicting the lives of southern sharecroppers, writer James Agee and photographer Walker Evans resisted journalistic conventions and raised important questions about the nature of documentary work and art. Underwriter: The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation in partnership with Pulitzer Prizes

MARCH 6 • Huck Gutman

Wordsworth: Plain and Simple

William Wordsworth was a strange yet pathbreaking poet who resisted writing poems that preened in being poems. UVM professor emeritus Huck Gutman discusses how someone so "plain" and "simple" became the most revolutionary, and probably most influential, poet of the past 250 years. Underwriter: Chroma Technology

APRIL 3 • Reeve Lindbergh

Two Lives

Reeve Lindbergh, daughter of aviator-authors Charles A. and Anne Morrow Lindbergh, discusses the intersection of fame and privacy as the spokesperson for one of the most famous families of the 20th century. Underwriter: Carole and Geof Gaddis

APRIL 30 (note date) • Harold Holzer

Lincoln Memorial Sculptor Daniel Chester French: The Making of an Icon

Biographer Harold Holzer tells the story of one of the great sculptors of the 19th century—creator of the Lincoln Memorial, "The Minute Man" of Concord, Massachusetts, and the "Spirit of Life," which was created for Brattleboro's park, stolen, and recovered. Underwriter: Crosby-Gannett Fund

Brownell
Library
802.878.6955
7:00 PM



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Library sponsors:

- Brownell Library Foundation
- The Essex Agency
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- Northfield Savings Bank
- RETN

Essex Junction

1st Wednesdays

OCTOBER 17 (Note date and time) ▪ David Sanger
The Perfect Weapon: War, Sabotage, and Fear in the Cyber Age

New York Times national security correspondent David Sanger describes America's use of cyber warfare in its arsenal. Examining its impact on both defense strategy and civil liberties, he argues that overclassification is not only impeding our understanding of government actions but also hurting national security. **Location: Ira Allen Chapel, Burlington, 5:00 PM.**

Co-sponsored with the Office of the President, University of Vermont. Underwriter: The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation in partnership with Pulitzer Prizes

NOVEMBER 7 ▪ Nicholas Ma
"Won't You Be My Neighbor?"

Producer Nicholas Ma discusses and shows clips from his recent film "Won't You Be My Neighbor?," a documentary about Mister Rogers, a leader in TV programming related to kindness, racial harmony, civility, and hope. **Underwriter: Husky Injection Molding Systems, Inc.**

DECEMBER 5 ▪ Paul Vincent
Daily Life in Prewar Nazi Germany

Focusing on the prewar experience of non-Jewish citizens, Keene State professor Paul Vincent examines how ideology and terror undermined human dignity, numbed self-awareness, and atomized German society. **Underwriter: Vermont Council on World Affairs**

JANUARY 2 ▪ James Maroney
American Modernism

Referencing the works of Georgia O'Keeffe, Marsden Hartley, and others, former Head of American Paintings at Christie's and Sotheby's James Maroney explains the importance and beauty of American art, 1913 to 1949.

FEBRUARY 6 ▪ Emily Bernard
We Were Eight Years in Power: An American Tragedy

UVM professor Emily Bernard discusses Ta-Nehisi Coates's most recent reflections on race, the Obama presidency, and the election of Donald Trump. *Books available to read in advance or afterwards (not required).* **Underwriter: University of Vermont Humanities Center**

MARCH 6 ▪ Sarah Stroup
Arguing about Civility

Middlebury political scientist Sarah Stroup asks: What topics are suitable for public discussion? And how can we facilitate productive disagreements? She explores how to deliberate hot topics in ways that are respectful and ultimately helpful. **Partner: Middlebury College and the Mellon Foundation**

APRIL 10 (Note date) ▪ Nancy Nahra
Amelia

The mysterious disappearance of Amelia Earhart in 1937 often overshadows her accomplishments as a pilot and author. Champlain College professor Nancy Nahra examines the remarkable life of the aviation legend. **Underwriter: Husky Injection Molding Systems, Inc.**

MAY 1 ▪ Mark A. Stoler
Churchill and Roosevelt: The Personal in the Partnership

UVM History Professor Emeritus Mark A. Stoler examines the important personal relationship between Britain's prime minister and America's president during their World War II alliance. **Underwriter: Lisa Schamberg and Pat Robins**

Host:
Manchester
Community
Library

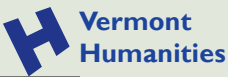
802.362.2607

Location:
First
Congregational
Church

7:00 PM



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Library sponsors:

- Mystic Cafe & Wine Bar
- Spring & Harbor Boutique
- Union Underground

Manchester

1st Wednesdays

OCTOBER 3 • Carroll Bogert

When Journalism Becomes Advocacy

Journalist Carroll Bogert, president of the Marshall Project, examines the line separating the media from activists, and considers what we gain, and what we lose, when journalism takes an obvious stand. **Underwriter:** The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation in partnership with Pulitzer Prizes

NOVEMBER 7 • Nancy Jay Crumbine

Celebrating E. B. White

From *Charlotte's Web* to his essays in *The New Yorker*, E. B. White remains the master's master of elegant prose, sophisticated wit, and graceful irreverence. Drawing on his various writings, Dartmouth professor Nancy Jay Crumbine celebrates White's versatility and legacy. **Underwriter:** r.k. Miles, Inc.

DECEMBER 5 • Deborah Evans

Robert Penn Warren's Timeless *All the King's Men*

Warren's 1947 Pulitzer-winning novel chronicles the rise and reign of politician Willie Stark—based on Louisiana's Huey Long—who stirs class resentments and mesmerizes crowds. Middlebury professor Deborah Evans examines how it addresses the moral challenges of balancing populist desires with the lure of personal power. **Books available to read in advance or afterwards (not required).** **Underwriter:** Woolmington, Campbell, Bent & Stasny, P.C.

JANUARY 2 • David Tibbs

Music of the Late 1960s: Social Upheaval in Song

Music historian David Tibbs shares and discusses music from this turbulent era and explores how its songs helped bring revolution into our living rooms. **Underwriter:** Anonymous

FEBRUARY 6 • Catherine A. Sanderson

"Nothing Either Good or Bad, But Thinking Makes It So."

Is this famous quotation from *Hamlet* true? Catherine A. Sanderson, Amherst College professor and author of *The Positive Shift*, outlines the significant difference we can make in our daily lives simply by adjusting our outlook. **Underwriter:** Northshire Bookstore

MARCH 6 • Barry O'Connell

What Does Emerson's Essay on Self-Reliance Mean?

Emerson's "Self-Reliance" is his most frequently read work. The very idea of self-reliance is central to our culture and to many Americans' self-definition. But, as Amherst professor Barry O'Connell explains, Emerson plays with the term's meaning until he finally dismisses it altogether. What, then, are we to make of the essay? **Underwriter:** Anonymous

APRIL 3 • David Macaulay

Life in the Studio

David Macaulay, award-winning author and illustrator of *Castle*, *Cathedral*, and *The Way We Work*, discusses current projects and challenges. **Underwriter:** Anonymous

MAY 1 • Harold Holzer

Lincoln's Second Inaugural Revisited

Historians rank Lincoln's majestic second inaugural address as one of the greatest political orations in American history. But at the time, the speech generated entirely partisan responses even as the Civil War headed toward Union victory. Preeminent Lincoln biographer Harold Holzer revisits the unforgettable day of March 4, 1865. **Underwriter:** Burr & Burton Academy

Ilsley
Public Library
802.388.4095
7:00 PM



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Series Underwriter:

The Residence at
Otter Creek

Library sponsor:

- Friends of the Ilsley Library

Middlebury

1st Wednesdays

OCTOBER 3 ▪ Irene Kacandes

Creativity and Historical Truths

Despite journalism's essential role in informing the public about significant events, Dartmouth professor Irene Kacandes argues that it's memoir, fiction, music, and art that often best convey truth and leave lasting impressions. **Underwriter:** The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation in partnership with Pulitzer Prizes

NOVEMBER 7 ▪ DeRay McKesson

Political Activism and the Case for Hope

Join Black Lives Matter advocate DeRay McKesson for an interactive program about political activism, as McKesson shares how his liberal arts education gives perspective and informs his approach to advocacy. **Location:** Wilson Hall, Middlebury College. **Partner:** Middlebury College and the Mellon Foundation

DECEMBER 5 ▪ Thomas Denenberg

The Wyeths: First Family of American Art

Shelburne Museum director Thomas Denenberg discusses the Wyeths—N. C. (1882–1945), Andrew (1917–2009), and Jamie (b. 1946)—and offers new perspectives on these painters. **Underwriter:** Tapia & Huckabay, P.C.

JANUARY 9 (Note date) ▪ Frank Bruni

Conversations with Frank Bruni

Join *New York Times* columnist Frank Bruni for a wide-ranging conversation on topics including identity politics and its effect on campuses and communities, and the importance of free speech. **Location:** Wilson Hall, Middlebury College. **Partner:** Middlebury College and the Mellon Foundation

FEBRUARY 6 ▪ Randall Balmer

What You Didn't Know about Evangelicalism

Most Americans associate evangelicals with the hard-right precincts of the Republican Party. But as Dartmouth religion professor Randall Balmer explains, evangelicalism in America has a much longer and more complex history, including a distinguished pedigree of working for progressive reforms. What happened? **Underwriter:** Vermont Council on World Affairs

MARCH 6 ▪ Peter Travis

Where's Chaucer in *The Canterbury Tales*?

Dartmouth professor Peter Travis discusses the subtle irony with which Chaucer depicts his pilgrims, leaving us to judge them for ourselves.

APRIL 3 ▪ Susan Clark

Slow Democracy and the Power of Neighborliness

Author and advocate Susan Clark explains the Slow Democracy movement in which ordinary people mobilize to find local solutions to local problems. In the process some find they can bridge the “us-them” divide so prevalent in our national politics. **Partner:** Middlebury College and the Mellon Foundation

MAY 1 ▪ Eleanor Jones Harvey

Natural Icons and National Identity: Frederic Church's Landscapes

Frederic Church painted landscapes of distinctive American features, including Natural Bridge in Virginia and Niagara Falls in New York. Eleanor Jones Harvey, senior curator at the Smithsonian American Art Museum, explores how and why we used these American landscapes to distinguish the scale and scope of our cultural ambitions. **Underwriter:** A Friend of the Series

Kellogg-
Hubbard
Library

802.223.3338

7:00 PM



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Montpelier

1st Wednesdays

OCTOBER 3 - John Stauffer

How the South Won the Civil War and Why It Matters

Most Americans were taught that the North won and the South lost the Civil War. But what if its underlying issues were never resolved? Harvard professor John Stauffer connects the Civil War era with current events, highlighting how the South effectively won the war and why it matters.

Location: Unitarian Church. **Underwriter:** Bear Pond Books

NOVEMBER 7 - Mark Potok

News, “Fake News,” and Democracy in America

“Fake news” has now entered America’s lexicon and political life. How is the explosion of misinformation changing the nation? How can journalists fight back? Mark Potok, former editor of the Southern Poverty Law Center’s *Intelligence Report*, considers the role of a serious free press in a post-industrial democracy. **Location:** Unitarian Church. **Underwriter:**

The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation in partnership with Pulitzer Prizes

DECEMBER 5 - Nancy Jay Crumbine

The Legacy of Rachel Carson

Silent Spring not only launched the environmental movement but also laid out the fundamental problems with our relationship to nature. Dartmouth professor Nancy Jay Crumbine celebrates scientist and poet Rachel Carson’s clarity, courage, and brilliance. **Underwriter:** Pomerleau Real Estate

JANUARY 2 - Joyce Mao

Mad Men and Mad Women: Gender in Mid-Century America

Referencing AMC’s *Mad Men*, Middlebury professor Joyce Mao examines the Cold War foundations of gender in the US in the early ’60s, when both government and corporations shaped middle-class masculinity and femininity.

FEBRUARY 6 - David Mills

An Evening with Langston Hughes

In this dramatic rendition of Langston Hughes’s poems and short stories, actor and writer David Mills celebrates the life of the Harlem Renaissance writer. **Location:** Farmers Night Series, House Chamber, Vermont State House, 7:30 PM. **Underwriter:** Cabot Creamery Cooperative

MARCH 6 - Jane Carroll

Virtue and Vice: The World of Vermeer’s Women

Dartmouth professor Jane Carroll examines the stories of courtship, seduction, and virtue portrayed and the encoded messages presented in the works of 17th-century Dutch painter Jan Vermeer.

APRIL 3 - Huck Gutman

Emily Dickinson: Poet of New England

Emily Dickinson lived her entire life in Amherst, Massachusetts. One of the greatest American poets, and probably the most important woman poet of all time, she was also a quintessential New England poet. UVM professor emeritus Huck Gutman explores what Dickinson can teach us. **Underwriter:** University of Vermont Humanities Center

MAY 1 and 4 - David Schütz

The Architecture of Montpelier

Vermont State Curator David Schütz explores Montpelier’s rich architectural history. He will follow his First Wednesdays program with a walking tour of Montpelier on Saturday, May 4, beginning at the library at 10:00 AM. **Underwriter:** Margot George Fund

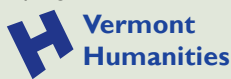
Goodrich
Memorial
Library

802.334.7902

7:00 PM



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Library sponsor:

- Community National Bank

Newport

1st Wednesdays

OCTOBER 3 - Huck Gutman

After Fifty Years of Teaching, a Teacher's Favorite Poems

UVM professor emeritus Huck Gutman reflects on some of his favorite poets, both American and European, whom he explored in his fifty years of teaching at UVM. **Underwriter:** University of Vermont Humanities Center

NOVEMBER 7 - Graziella Parati

The Roots of Fascism

Dartmouth professor Graziella Parati tells the history of fascism and its roots in Italy in 1919, and explores similarities and differences in the fascist regimes of Adolf Hitler and Francisco Franco.

DECEMBER 5 - David Moats, Anne Galloway, and Chris Braithwaite

Making Sense of the News, Local to Global

Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist David Moats leads a panel discussion with some of the region's best journalists, including *VTDigger* founder and editor Anne Galloway and *Chronicle* founder and publisher Chris Braithwaite. **Underwriter:** The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation in partnership with Pulitzer Prizes

JANUARY 2 - Katy Smith Abbott

The Original Renaissance Man:

Understanding Leonardo da Vinci

Famed for paintings such as *The Last Supper* and the portrait of Mona Lisa, Leonardo da Vinci was also a dedicated observer and a prolific journal writer. Middlebury associate professor Katy Smith Abbott considers what set him apart, then and now.

FEBRUARY 6 - Chris Bohjalian

The Artist as Activist

When is art activism and when is it escapism? Artists can take the risks that politicians won't, and art can often reach people in ways that politics can't. Author Chris Bohjalian discusses how he has used fiction to address issues as diverse as genocide, domestic violence, and teen homelessness. **Underwriter:** Passumpsic Savings Bank Member FDIC

MARCH 6 - Nancy Jay Crumbine

A Slight Sound at Evening:

Why Thoreau's Quiet Writing Endures Today

Drawing upon Thoreau's journals and letters, Dartmouth professor Nancy Jay Crumbine examines the spirituality, inherent and explicit, in his walking and writing life.

APRIL 3 - Thetford Chamber Singers

Poetry and Song

The Thetford Chamber Singers veteran singing ensemble presents powerful literary texts with complex choral arrangements, including the work of Wendell Berry, Emily Dickinson, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, and others. **Underwriter:** Vermont College of Fine Arts

MAY 1 - Barry Deitz

The Game's Afoot

Scholar Barry Deitz looks at the life and times of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, the creator of Sherlock Holmes. He will discuss the inspiration for Holmes and examine what other writers, actors, and directors have done with the character over the past 130 years. **Underwriter:** Stanstead College

Hosts:

**Norwich
Public Library**

802.649.1184

**Norwich
Historical
Society**

Location:

**Norwich
Congregational
Church**

7:00 PM



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- Norwich Historical Society
- Jane W. Stetson and E. William Stetson III

Norwich

1st Wednesdays

OCTOBER 3 - Richard Wright

US Immigration Policy in Historical Perspective

One would think that current anxieties about immigration in the US have never been more intense, but history teaches us otherwise. Dartmouth professor Richard Wright examines the present-day contradictions of US immigration policy and places them in historical perspective.

NOVEMBER 7 - Manisha Sinha

The Antislavery Press and the Road to Civil War

University of Connecticut history professor Manisha Sinha explores the work and legacy of antislavery editors such as William Lloyd Garrison, Frederick Douglass, and pioneering African American and women editors whose journalism was critical to the abolition of slavery. *Co-sponsored by the Dartmouth College History Department. Underwriter: The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation in partnership with Pulitzer Prizes*

DECEMBER 5 - Willard Sterne Randall

Hamilton: The Man and the Musical

From his birth in the Caribbean to death in a duel, Alexander Hamilton's life was part romance, part tragedy. Hamilton biographer Willard Sterne Randall discusses the man and the blockbuster Broadway musical, with excerpts from its score. *Underwriter: Crossroads Academy*

JANUARY 2 - Michele Barale

My Antonia

Amherst professor Michele Barale explores how Willa Cather's novel brings alive immigrants' experience in the American West and blazes new trails depicting women as strong, independent role models. *Books available to read in advance or afterwards (not required). Underwriter: The Norwich Bookstore*

FEBRUARY 6 - Carol Berry

Van Gogh's Influence on Art, and Art's Influence on Him

Art historian Carol Berry considers the experiences, painters, and authors that influenced Vincent Van Gogh's work, and looks at his influence on twentieth-century artists. *Underwriter: Stave Puzzles*

MARCH 6 - David Herzberg

The Opioid Crisis: A Historical Perspective

Today's opioid epidemic is often portrayed as a new, shocking development. Yet it is only the most recent crisis in more than a century of widespread pharmaceutical addiction. Historian David Herzberg tells the story of past epidemics of addiction and draws lessons from America's long history of drug policy failures and occasional successes. *Underwriter: Otto & Associates*

APRIL 3 - Marcelo Gleiser

Physicists' Dream of a Theory of Everything

Theoretical physicists have long dreamt of a theory of everything that encompasses all matter. Dartmouth professor Marcelo Gleiser describes how physics and astronomy obtain knowledge of the natural world and how their limitations preclude us from ever getting to a "final" theory.

MAY 1 - Emily Bazelon

Prosecutors and the Battle to End Mass Incarceration

For 40+ years, prosecutors have driven the country toward mass incarceration and a crisis of justice shot through with unfairness and racial discrimination. Yale Law School lecturer Emily Bazelon considers the current movement for a new breed of prosecutor. *Underwriter: Otto & Associates*

Rutland Free
Library
802.773.1860
7:00 PM



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- The Windham Foundation

Library sponsor:

- Friends of Rutland Free Library

Rutland

1st Wednesdays

OCTOBER 3 - Paul Monod

The British Monarchy: Politics, Money, and Public Image

Americans were fascinated by the British royal family long before Meghan Markle, but few have understood its history. What role has the monarchy played in the British constitution? How is it financed, and how important is its public image? Middlebury professor Paul Monod addresses these questions. *Underwriter: Phyllis and Michael Wells*

NOVEMBER 7 - Katherine Paterson

Bread and Roses, Too

Acclaimed children's book author Katherine Paterson discusses her novel of historical fiction that tells the story of the 1912 "Bread and Roses" strike in the Lawrence, Massachusetts textile mills through the eyes of an Italian-American girl and a runaway boy.

DECEMBER 5 - Jane Lindholm

Objectivity in the Fake News Era

VPR host Jane Lindholm offers ways for listeners to ensure that the news they get is accurate, and for news organizations to safeguard their reporting as fair and correct. *Co-sponsored with Vermont Public Radio. Underwriter: The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation in partnership with Pulitzer Prizes*

JANUARY 2 - Willard Sterne Randall

Hamilton: The Man and the Musical

From his birth in the Caribbean to death in a duel, Alexander Hamilton's life was part romance, part tragedy. Hamilton biographer Willard Sterne Randall discusses the man and the blockbuster Broadway musical.

FEBRUARY 6 - Jane Chaplin

The Invention of History

The idea of writing history didn't always exist. Middlebury professor Jane Chaplin describes the inception of history, which we owe to two extraordinary Greeks, Herodotus and Thucydides, a fascinating story whether one is interested in history or not. *Underwriter: Vermont Council on World Affairs*

MARCH 6 - Catharine Wright

Outlaw Women

Feminist writers worldwide have constructed characters who resist dominant power structures. Middlebury professor Catharine Wright discusses several such figures in fiction and memoir and considers the politics of our own reading practices. *Underwriter: The Marble Valley Regional Correctional Facility*

APRIL 3 - Richard Wolfson

Einstein in a Nutshell

Einstein's famous theory of relativity is based on an idea so simple it can be stated in one sentence. Yet from that simple idea, explains Middlebury professor Richard Wolfson, follow conclusions that have revolutionized our notions of space, time, and causality. *Underwriter: Jim Alic*

MAY 1 - James Davis

Civility and Its Discontents

While many pundits lament the death of civility in American politics, others argue that a commitment to civility minimizes our differences in the name of public nicety. Middlebury religion professor James Davis explains why civility is essential for a well-ordered democracy. *Partner: Middlebury College and the Mellon Foundation*

St. Johnsbury
Athenaeum
802.748.8291
7:00 PM



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St. Johnsbury Academy

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St. Johnsbury 1st Wednesdays

OCTOBER 3 - Katherine Paterson

Bread and Roses, Too

Acclaimed children's book author Katherine Paterson discusses her novel of historical fiction that tells the story of the 1912 "Bread and Roses" strike in the Lawrence, Massachusetts textile mills through the eyes of an Italian-American girl and a runaway boy.

NOVEMBER 7 - Stan Sloan

The Fate of Western Democracy

Liberal democracy—the system of representative democracy, individual liberty, and the rule of law on which America was founded—is being challenged by both foreign powers and domestic politicians who favor more autocratic governance. Visiting scholar at Middlebury College Stan Sloan discusses these threats. **Underwriter:** Vermont Council on World Affairs

DECEMBER 6 (Note date) - Barry Deitz

Charles Dickens and the Writing of *A Christmas Carol*

Dickens scholar Barry Deitz considers Dickens's career up to the publication of *A Christmas Carol* in 1843, what the novella's success meant to Dickens's life and work, and how the story has resonated since, including in films.

JANUARY 2 - Damascus Kafumbe

Music, Storytelling, and Politics

Ethnomusicologist and Middlebury assistant professor Damascus Kafumbe examines music-making and storytelling, especially as they are used both to maintain political power and to help people survive political repression in his native Uganda.

FEBRUARY 6 - David Shribman and Cynthia Skrzycki

The News about the News

Journalists Cindy Skrzycki and Pulitzer Prize winner David Shribman examine the current media landscape, distinguishing between fake and real news, amateur and professional, slanted and objective. **Underwriter:** The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation in partnership with Pulitzer Prizes

MARCH 6 - Will Nash

The Power of the Journey in *Their Eyes Were Watching God*

Zora Neale Hurston's landmark novel tells the story of Janie Mae Crawford's journey from adolescence to maturity, from dependence to autonomy, and most importantly, from silence to speech. Middlebury professor Will Nash examines Janie's timeless journey. *Books available to read before or afterwards.*

APRIL 3 - Carol Berry

Vincent Van Gogh and the Books He Read

Van Gogh's letters reveal that his paintings and drawings were inspired by his reading as well as by people, nature, and other painters' work. Art historian Carol Berry shows the profound influence of the works of Harriet Beecher Stowe, Charles Dickens, George Eliot, and others on Van Gogh's life and art.

MAY 2 (Note date) - Eleanor Jones Harvey

Bierstadt's "Domes of Yosemite": The Creation of an Icon

Yosemite was more than the first federally protected American landscape; it was an emblem of freedom in the years surrounding the Civil War. Eleanor Jones Harvey, senior curator at Smithsonian American Art Museum, discusses the story behind Albert Bierstadt's monumental painting, weaving together several historical threads to deepen our appreciation of Yosemite as part of our national identity. **Underwriter:** Passumpsic Savings Bank ^{Member FDIC}



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