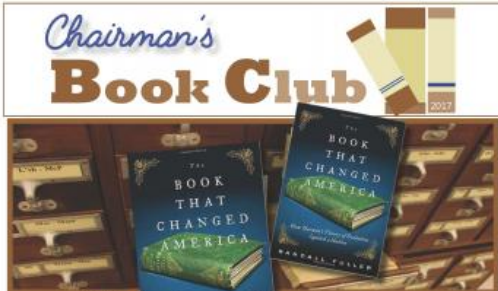


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[Home](#) > Next Chairman's Book Club, Friday, June 16, 2017

Mon, 05/08/2017 - 5:24pm — testaj

Next Chairman's Book Club, Friday, June 16, 2017




Public discussion on new books and current events
 Hosted by Frank Housh, Library Board Chairman
 Free & Open to the Public
 Downtown Central Library
 1 Lafayette Square, Buffalo

Friday, June 16 @ 12 noon
The Book That Changed America: How Darwin's Theory of Evolution Ignited a Nation
 by Randall Fuller (2017)

Featuring Panelists:
 Douglas DeCroix, Executive Editor, Western New York Heritage
 George DeTitta, Principal Scientist, Jelly Jar Labs & UB Professor Emeritus, Structural Biology
 Reverend Joan Montagnes, Unitarian Universalist Church of Buffalo

Books available @ Buffalo & Erie County Public Libraries
 Ask about our "Book Club in a Bag"



The Buffalo & Erie County Public Library, 1 Lafayette Square, Buffalo will host the next Chairman's Book Club discussion on **Friday, June 16 at 12 noon** to discuss Randall Fuller's 2017 non-fiction title *The Book That Changed America: How Darwin's Theory of Evolution Ignited a Nation*. Library Board Chairman Frank Housh, who selects books of particular relevance to current issues, will moderate a distinguished panel consisting of:

- Douglas DeCroix, Executive Editor, Western New York Heritage Press
- George DeTitta, Principal Scientist, Jelly Jar Labs & UB Professor Emeritus, Structural Biology
- Reverend Joan Montagnes, Unitarian Universalist Church of Buffalo

The program is free and open to the public. Copies of the book are available through the Buffalo & Erie County Public Libraries and as a "Book Club in a Bag" offering.

Often cited as "the most influential book ever written," Charles Darwin's *On the Origin of Species* elicited world-wide response, and often fiery debate, upon its publication in 1859. Fuller's account discusses a turning point in American intellectual thought in 1860, as the nation was hurtling toward the Civil War, when a just-published copy is discussed during a dinner party in Concord, Massachusetts. The most influential American intellectuals of the time – Amos Bronson Alcott (father of writer Louisa May Alcott), naturalist Henry David Thoreau, child welfare reformer Charles Loring Brace and abolitionist Franklin Sanborn – around that dinner table each ultimately incorporated Darwin's assertion of a common ancestry for all creatures as a powerful argument against slavery, the cause that united them.

ABOUT *THE BOOK THAT CHANGED AMERICA*

A compelling portrait of a unique moment in American history when the ideas of Charles Darwin reshaped American notions about nature, religion, science and race

"A lively and informative history." – *The New York Times Book Review*

Throughout its history America has been torn in two by debates over ideals and beliefs. Randall Fuller takes us back to one of those turning points, in 1860, with the story of the influence of Charles Darwin's just-published *On the Origin of Species* on five American intellectuals, including Bronson Alcott, Henry David Thoreau, the child welfare reformer Charles Loring Brace, and the abolitionist Franklin Sanborn.

Each of these figures seized on the book's assertion of a common ancestry for all creatures as a powerful argument against slavery, one that helped provide scientific credibility to the cause of abolition. Darwin's depiction of constant struggle and endless competition described America on the brink of civil war. But some had difficulty aligning the new theory to their religious convictions and their faith in a higher power. Thoreau, perhaps the most profoundly affected all, absorbed Darwin's views into his mysterious final work on species migration and the interconnectedness of all living things.

Creating a rich tableau of nineteenth-century American intellectual culture, as well as providing a fascinating biography of perhaps the single most important idea of that time, *The Book That Changed America* is also an account of issues and concerns still with us today, including racism and the enduring conflict between science and religion.

-- **Amazon**

"Fuller is a lively, engaging writer, with an eye for fascinating details. . .[he] has mined this rich material with care and insight. . .[His] most surprising revelation is the profound impact Darwin's portrait of a 'teeming, pulsating natural world' exerted on Thoreau."

-- **The New York Times Book Review**

A first edition copy of Darwin's masterwork is included in the Downtown Library's ongoing exhibition *Milestones of Science: Books That Shook the World!*, on view free to the public through September 2017. For more information on Library activities, visit www.BuffaloLib.org or call 716-858-8900.

Tags:

[Chairman's book club](#)

[Randall Fuller](#)

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