



SUFFOLK
UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF ARTS & SCIENCES

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THE BOSTON ATHENÆUM AND SUFFOLK UNIVERSITY PRESENT
CIVIC DISCOURSE: LITERACY AND DEMOCRACY,
A SERIES OF PANELS AND LECTURES

Featured Speakers Include Jonathan Kozol, Nicholas Negroponte, Viola Vaughn and more

(BOSTON – Feb. 23, 2010) Civic Discourse: Literacy and Democracy marks the second year of an initiative sponsored by the Boston Athenæum and Suffolk University. Each year, these institutions jointly present a series of lectures and panel discussions devoted to a topic of national significance. Events are free and open to the public by advance reservation, and will take place at the Boston Athenæum and Suffolk’s Beacon Hill campus. For more information call (617) 227-0270.

With the civic discourse initiative, our goal is to foster the historic role of the Boston Athenæum as an institution in which the most pressing issues of the day find a full and intelligent hearing,” says Stanford Calderwood Director and Librarian Paula Matthews. “We strive to make the Boston Athenæum synonymous not only with our collections and programming in the humanities, but also with the discussion of important political, social, and scientific concerns. We are very fortunate to have been able to forge a relationship with the College of Arts and Sciences at Suffolk University, a major institutional presence in our neighborhood.”

Kenneth S. Greenberg, Dean of Suffolk University’s College of Arts and Sciences says, “Our goal with the civic discourse initiative is to treat from a variety of perspectives significant and complex issues as thoroughly as possible. The topic of Literacy and Democracy is of vital importance to our society and of mutual interest to the communities served by the Athenæum and by Suffolk University. We are delighted to be working closely on this project with our neighbor on Beacon Hill.”

Funding for the Civic Discourse Initiative has been provided by the Daniel and Joanna S. Rose Programming Fund at the Boston Athenæum and by Suffolk University’s College of Arts and Sciences.

Feb. 23, 6 p.m.

Inaugural Lecture: Joy and Justice: A Challenge to the Young to Serve the Children of the Poor

Jonathan Kozol

Suffolk University, C. Walsh Theatre, 55 Temple St.

Kozol's first book, *Death at an Early Age: The Destruction of the Hearts and Minds of Negro Children in the Boston Public Schools*, won the National Book Award, and has sold over two million copies. His other books have given a voice to some of America's most pressing issues: *Illiterate America*, *Rachel and Her Children*, *Amazing Grace: The Lives of Children and the Conscience of a Nation*, *Savage Inequalities: Children in America's Schools*, and *Ordinary Resurrections: Children in the Years of Hope*. Kozol's most recent book *The Shame of the Nation*, was his strongest work to date – a powerful piece exposing dramatic racial isolation in over 60 inner-city schools. Kozol is the founder of Education Action, a non-profit dedicated to grassroots organizing of teachers across the country who wish to help create a unified system of American public schools.

Reservations will be accepted starting Feb. 10 at (617) 720-7600.

March 11, 6 p.m.

Panel Discussion: Adult Literacy in the Digital Age

Boston Athenæum, 10½ Beacon Street

Adult Literacy in the Digital Age, the second event in 2010 Civic Discourse Series: Literacy and Democracy, features **Joanne Appleton Arnaud**, Executive Director, First Literacy; **Wick Sloane**, Professor of Expository Writing, Bunker Hill Community College; and **James Tracy**, Headmaster of Cushing Academy.

Joanne Appleton Arnaud, Ph.D, has taught political science at several colleges and universities and was co-founder of the Women's Studies Department at the University of Minnesota. Arnaud's work in continuing education and community development led to her becoming Executive Director of First Literacy, in 1989. She has written about participatory education in *From the Community to the Community* and "Building on Community Strengths: A Model for Training Literacy Instructors."

Wick Sloane is a professor of expository writing at Bunker Hill Community College, in Boston. Outside the classroom, he takes on odd jobs to investigate higher education from the perspective of financially disadvantaged students. He received a fellowship from the Hechinger Institute at Columbia University to research finance and equity in the community college system. Professor Sloane has written a pamphlet, *Common Sense*, declaring that the four-year bachelor's degree is obsolete.

James Tracy, Ph.D., is Headmaster of Cushing Academy in Ashburnham, Mass. He served as Headmaster at Boston University Academy and on the faculty of the Hotchkiss School. Tracy was also a visiting fellow in the Department of History at Yale University. He has been a leader in the independent school community and has written extensively on educational issues.

Reservations will be accepted starting Feb. 26 at 617-720-7600.

March 22, 6 p.m.

Lecture: Teaching Literacy in Senegal

Viola Vaughn

Suffolk University, C. Walsh Theatre, 55 Temple St.

Viola M. Vaughn, Ed.D., serves as founder and Executive Director of the Women's Health Education and Prevention Strategies Alliance (WHEPSA) and the 10,000 Girls initiative in Kaolack, Senegal, in West Africa. She founded WHEPSA in 2001 to develop new strategies for offering health and educational

services to girls in rural Senegal. Vaughn acquired considerable administrative and teaching experience in health care and education, in both the U.S. and six different African countries. In 2000, Vaughn and her husband, jazz musician Sam Sanders, emigrated their family to Senegal to provide their five grandchildren with an international, multilingual, and multicultural education. Her experience home schooling her grandchildren aroused local curiosity in the Kaolack community, which ultimately led to the creation of WHEPSA's 10,000 Girls initiative. Vaughn's innovative approach integrates education and employment for girls through a self-sustaining program.

Reservations will be accepted starting March 10, 2010 at 617-720-7600.

April 8, 6 p.m.

Panel Discussion: Prison Literacy

Boston Athenæum, 10 ½ Beacon Street

A discussion of Prison Literacy features **Jill McDonough**, poet; **Steven Spitzer**, professor of Sociology, Suffolk University; and **Bob Waxler**, professor of English, University of Massachusetts, Dartmouth. The panel will be moderated by author **Jack Gantos**.

Jill McDonough's first book of poems, *Habeas Corpus*, was published in 2008. She is the recipient of fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts, Fine Arts Work Center, New York Public Library, and Stanford's Stegner program. McDonough has taught incarcerated college students through Boston University's Prison Education program since 1999. Her work appears in *Slate* and *Threepenny Review*.

Steven Spitzer, Ph.D., professor of Sociology at Suffolk University in Boston, has served as an educator, researcher, and author in the fields of sociology and criminal justice for almost 40 years. In the last decade, he has focused on the development of emotional literacy programs for men in country, state, and federal prisons. He is founder of the Jericho Circle Project (JCP), a non-profit organization that helps incarcerated men "flip the script" and "rewrite" their lives. Currently, he is completing a book on his work behind bars titled, *The Accidental Crucible: Healing Men in the Belly of the Beast*.

Robert Waxler, Ph.D., co-founded Changing Lives Through Literature (CLTL), a nationally recognized alternative sentencing program for criminal offenders that provides a series of literature seminars. He has served as Dean of the Division of Continuing Education, Associate Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, and Chairperson of the English Department at UMass Dartmouth. In addition to several books, he has co-authored *Success Stories: Life Skills Through Literature*, published by the U.S. Department of Education, and co-edited *Changing Lives Through Literature*, an anthology from Notre Dame Press.

Jack Gantos is the author of over forty books for young readers. His books range from the "Rotten Ralph" picture book series to the National Book Award and Newbury Honor Award winning "Joey Pigza" series, to his prison memoir, *Hole in My Life*, which received a Printz and Seibert Honor for outstanding young adult literature. He taught Literature and Creative Writing at Emerson College for 20 years before resigning his position to become a frequent visitor of the Boston Athenæum.

Reservations will be accepted starting March 26, 2010 at 617-720-7600.

April 27, 6 p.m.

A Mission, Not a Market: One Laptop Per Child

Nicholas Negroponte

Boston Athenæum, 10 ½ Beacon Street

Nicholas Negroponte is founder and chairman of the One Laptop per Child, a non-profit organization working to create educational opportunities for the world's poorest children by providing each with a rugged, low-cost, low-power, connected laptop with content and software designed for collaborative, joyful, self-empowered learning. He is currently on leave from Massachusetts Institute of Technology, where he was co-founder and director of the MIT Media Lab, and the Jerome B. Wiesner Professor of Media Technology. A graduate of MIT, Negroponte was a pioneer in the field of computer-aided design, and has been a member of the MIT faculty since 1966. He is also author of the 1995 best seller, *Being Digital*, which has been translated into more than 40 languages. In the private sector, Negroponte serves on the board of directors for Motorola, Inc. He is also a general partner in a venture capital firm specializing in digital technologies for information and entertainment. Negroponte has provided start-up funds for more than 40 companies, including *Wired* magazine.

Reservations will be accepted starting April 14 at (617) 720-7600.

Information about the Civic Discourse Series, as well as an archive of last year's series topic, Media and Democracy, is available at <http://www.suffolk.edu/college/33751.html>. The Civic Discourse blog <http://blogs.cas.suffolk.edu/cividdiscourse/> follows events in the current series and invites viewer participation.

About the Boston Athenæum

The Boston Athenæum, founded in 1807, is one of the oldest and most distinguished independent libraries in the United States. The building's first floor galleries are always free and open to the public. The Library's Norma Jean Calderwood Gallery features new exhibitions two to three times a year, and works of art from the Athenæum's formidable permanent collection are on display on a rotating basis in the public areas. New members are always welcome. In addition to library borrowing privileges, members enjoy access to beautiful research rooms with wireless internet access, and many events, including concerts, lectures, book groups, children's story hours and a delightful bi-weekly Athenæum afternoon tea. The Library offers fellowships and research opportunities for scholars who wish to make use of the Athenæum's special collections. For information about membership, including discounted membership for young people, visit www.bostonathenaeum.org.

About Suffolk University

Suffolk University, with 15 buildings on and around Beacon Hill in the heart of Boston, draws 9,000 students from the United States and from 95 countries around the world. The College of Arts and Sciences offers more than 70 areas of study at the undergraduate, master's, and doctoral levels, and is home to seven research institutes. Suffolk University celebrated its centennial in 2006. For more information visit the Web site at www.suffolk.edu or call (617) 305-6316.