

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 8, 2019

Groton Reads *The Storied Life of A. J. Fikry* by Gabrielle Zevin

This year's Groton Reads book is *The Storied Life of A. J. Fikry* by Gabrielle Zevin, a 2014 novel about a curmudgeonly bookstore owner on an island off the coast of Massachusetts. Life is not going well for Fikry; his wife passed a few months ago, his bookstore is not doing well, and he is drinking too much. To top it all off, his most prized possession, a rare collection of Edgar Allan Poe poems, has been stolen. But an unexpected surprise is in store for Fikry, and it will transform him and the entire community.

The Storied Life of A. J. Fikry was selected for many reasons, but first and foremost because it is an engaging read, one that many report reading in one sitting. Also, it is set in a small Massachusetts town, focuses on community, and is in part about how reading and sharing about books can bring people together. *Fikry* has wide, popular appeal, and is available in every book and audio format. Stop by the Circulation Desk to pick up a copy or download it now (eBook or eAudiobook) through Hoopla with your GPL library card number. Read or listen to the book, then join Groton in the discussion and celebration of events!

There are great book-related programs coming up in March! Our kick-off event is Ken Gloss, Rare Book Specialist and Owner of The Brattle Book Shop in Boston, on Thursday, February 28, at 6 p.m. (Please note unusual start time.) Ken is frequently consulted in popular media, whether *Antiques Roadshow*, newspapers, or radio programs, as well as for the F.B.I. and major auction houses. Bring a book for Ken to appraise!

Each chapter title in *Fikry* is the name of a well-known short story, such as *The Tell-Tale Heart* and *The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County*; using this as inspiration, there will be a four-part Short Story Appreciation Series led by UMASS Lowell English Professor Bernadette Stockwell on Monday nights in March at 7 pm. (GPL is closed on Mondays, but the doors will open at 6:30 pm for this special series on March 4, 11, 18, and 25!)

One of the most endearing stories in *Fikry* is when the local Police Chief Lambiase starts leading a "Chief's Choice" book discussion series at Island Books. Groton Police Chief Mike Luth is going to host his own "Chief's Choice" event on Wednesday, March 13, at 7 p.m. Chief Luth will share his thoughts on the book, what he enjoys reading, and reminisce about visiting the Groton Public Library every week as a child.

Author Gabrielle Zevin lives in Los Angeles will do a LIVE video call on Tuesday, March 19! The event starts at 7 p.m. with a short book discussion, and then we will talk and see Gabrielle live

through the miracle of video calling. Bring your questions for Gabrielle. For more about the author, visit gabriellezevin.com.

Edgar Allan Poe is referenced many times in *Fikry*, so join us as Campbell Harman brings Poe to life in Edgar Allan Poe LIVE! on Sunday, March 24, at 2 p.m., with his dramatic performances of *The Tell-Tale Heart* and *The Raven*. Campbell speaks in-character as Poe with the audience about the author's life, his death, and his profound influence on American literature--dispelling the myths that have surrounded his legacy to show how his works continue to affect us today.

There will be a Short Story SLAM for Teens on Thursday, March 21, at 7 p.m. Short story writers in Grades 6-12: please submit your short story by Thursday, March 7, to Deb Dowson, Teen Librarian at teens@gpl.org, then come and read it aloud on the 21st! Audience members (of all ages) will vote for their favorites. Prizes will be awarded!

Kids participate in Groton Reads, too! This year, we align with Florence Roche's musical production in March by reading *James and the Giant Peach* by Roahl Dahl in our monthly book discussion for 4th and 5th graders on Tuesday, March 5, at 4:15 p.m., and by showing the movie during school vacation week on Wednesday, February 20, at 10:30 a.m. (PG; recommended for ages 7 & up.) This ties in with *Fikry*, because *James* is mentioned as a character's favorite book on the first page.

Groton Reads is generously supported by the GPL Endowment Trust. All events will be held at the Groton Public Library. For more information or to sign up for events, please visit gpl.org, call 978-448-8000, or email info@gpl.org.

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