

## **FKCC Library to Host “Let’s Talk About It: Making Sense of the American Civil War Reading and Discussion Series”**



The FKCC Library presents a reading and discussion series on the Civil War. Pictured above: an African American family circa 1863-65. Courtesy of the American Library Association.

KEY WEST, FL, January 19, 2012—The FKCC Library will host a free, five-part reading and discussion series called “Let’s Talk About It: Making Sense of the American Civil War.” The FKCC library is one of only 65 public libraries nationwide receiving a grant to host the series developed by the American Library Association and the National Endowment for the Humanities. The approximately two-hour sessions are open to all members of the community and will be held each Tuesday, January 31 through February 28.

“We are delighted to have been chosen to host this unique series that will allow patrons a chance to discuss the legacy of the Civil War with fellow community members and with the help of a well-qualified scholar,” said Juana Careaga, Director of the FKCC Library.

FKCC history professor Sharon Farrell, a Ph.D. candidate who specializes in minority history, will lead the group discussions. At each session, the conversation will focus on a different facet of the Civil War experience, using one or more common texts as a foundation and touchstone.

The [reading list](#) includes works of historical fiction and interpretation, speeches, diaries, memoirs, biographies, and short stories. Readings also include an introductory essay, which provides context for the entire “Making Sense of the American Civil War” series and for each of the five sessions. The essay was written by the national project scholar: Edward L. Ayers,

President of the University of Richmond, historian of the American South, and digital history pioneer.

“We want to reach out and get the public interested in the subject,” said Farrell. “Key West is unique and experienced the Civil War in a unique way. It’s the only southern city that was occupied by Union troops from the beginning of the war and it became very important in terms of catching blockade runners.”

Farrell also noted that the discussion series is especially timely and significant for the Keys, as it coincides with Fort Zachary Taylor’s 26<sup>th</sup> Annual Civil War Heritage Days, Feb 10 through 12.

“Let’s Talk About It” is the second ALA/NEH grant-funded program the college has brought to the Keys, following the traveling exhibition, “Lincoln: The Constitution and the Civil War,” last February.

Local support for the series is provided by the Key West Literary Seminar, the Friends at Fort Zachary Taylor, the Monroe County Public Library, and the Literacy Volunteers of America.

To obtain copies of program materials or to check out the books, visit the FKCC Library located on the Key West Campus, or contact them by phone at 305-809-3194 or email [library@fkcc.edu](mailto:library@fkcc.edu). Residents of Monroe County can check out materials with local identification. The library hours are Monday 8:30a.m. to 9:00p.m., Tuesday through Thursday 8:30a.m. to 8:30p.m., Friday through Saturday 8:30a.m. to 4p.m. More information can be found at <http://library.fkcc.edu>

### **READING LIST:**

- “March” by Geraldine Brooks (Penguin, 2006)
- “Crossroads of Freedom: Antietam” by James McPherson (Oxford University Press, 2002)
- “America’s War: Talking About the Civil War and Emancipation on Their 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversaries,” a forthcoming anthology of historical fiction, speeches, diaries, memoirs, biography, and short stories, edited by national project scholar Edward L. Ayers and co-published by NEH and ALA.

### **SCHEDULE OF DISCUSSION SESSIONS:**

- **Session I – Imagining War**  
Tuesday, January 31 at 6:00p.m.  
Readings: “March” by Geraldine Brooks and “American War” anthology, part 1, edited by Edward L. Ayers
- **Session II – Choosing Sides**  
Tuesday, February 7 at 2:00p.m.  
Reading: “American War” anthology, part 2
- **Session III – Making Sense of Shiloh**  
Tuesday, February 14 at 2:00p.m.  
Reading: “American War” anthology, part 3
- **Session IV – The Shape of War**  
Tuesday, February 21 at 2:00p.m.

Readings: "Crossroads of Freedom" by James McPherson and "American War" anthology, part 4

- Session V – **War and Freedom**  
Tuesday, February 28 at 2:00p.m.  
Reading: "American War" anthology, part 5

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