

# 2014-2015 ADELANTE BOOK LIST

Adelante is a book discussion group sponsored by AAUW that focuses on various aspects of diversity. Anyone interested in reading and discussing the books is welcome to attend. We encourage you to invite friends to attend the meetings. We choose only books with copies in the local libraries. Readers who use library copies are encouraged to read the books enough ahead of the discussion date to enable other readers to also have access to the books.

**Date/Time: fourth Tuesday of each month at 2:30 PM**  
**Place: 104 E. Willard St., Urbana**  
**Contact person: Phyllis Cline, 344-4806, plcline@comcast.net**

Library location, number and type of copies: U = Urbana C = Champaign LP = large print  
Audiobook = book on disc eBook = electronic copy

## SEPTEMBER 23

*My Beloved World* by Sonia Sotomayor (2013)

A powerfully compelling and emotionally intimate memoir about identity and coming of age by the first Hispanic justice on the United States Supreme Court. Sotomayor's life story is the embodiment of the American dream. From her childhood in a Bronx housing project she would overcome poverty, family dysfunction, and childhood diabetes to go on to Princeton, Yale Law School, the Manhattan district attorney's office, private practice, appointment to the Federal District Court, and ultimately to the Supreme Court.

U – 5 + 1 LP + 1 audiobook C – 6 + 1 audiobook + 1 eBook

## OCTOBER 28

*Roads Less Traveled* by James Warfield (2009)

Written simultaneously in English and Chinese, this is a gorgeous book that takes its readers on a spectacular armchair travelogue to several continents. You will see many colorful examples of vernacular architecture and the incredibly diverse people from countries visited by the author and his wife Chelle over several decades and described in his very detailed journal entries.

U – 1 C - 2 Phyllis Cline has a copy + 2 others are being distributed

## NOVEMBER 25

*Lost Kingdom: Hawaii's Last Queen, the Sugar Kings, and America's First Imperial Adventure* by Julia Flynn Siler (2012)

In 1778 Captain Cook discovered this Pacific kingdom, setting in motion an inevitable clash between the vulnerable Polynesian people and the relentlessly expanding capitalist powers of progress. In the next century, when it became a target for missionaries intent on Christianizing the natives, it was invaded, annexed, and absorbed. Portrayals of royalty, rogues, sugar barons, and missionaries combine into a sweeping tale of the Hawaiian kingdom's rise and fall.

U - 1 + 1 audiobook C – 2

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DECEMBER 16 (third week, not fourth)

***Toxic Charity: How Churches and Charities Hurt Those They Help and How to Reverse It*** by Robert Lupton (2011)

Veteran urban activist Robert Lupton reveals the shockingly toxic effects that modern charity has upon the very people meant to benefit from it. *Toxic Charity* provides proven new models for charitable groups who want to help—not sabotage—those whom they desire to serve. It shows us how to start serving needy and impoverished members of our communities in a way that will lead to lasting, real-world change.

U - 0    C - 1    Hannah Kline has a copy and will borrow others

JANUARY 27

***Mountains Beyond Mountains*** by Tracy Kidder (2003)

Doctor, Harvard professor, renowned infectious-disease specialist, anthropologist, and recipient of a MacArthur “genius” grant, Farmer found his life’s calling: to diagnose and cure infectious diseases and bring the lifesaving tools of modern medicine to those who need them most. The story takes us from Harvard to Haiti, Peru, Cuba, and Russia as Farmer changes minds and practices through his dedication to the philosophy that “the only real nation is humanity”—a philosophy that is embodied in the public charity he founded, Partners In Health. Jim Yong Kim, current President of the World Bank, is also featured in the story for his early work with Partners In Health.

U - 1    C - 1    Phyllis Cline has a copy and will borrow two others

FEBRUARY 24

***The Bill of the Century: The Epic Battle for the Civil Rights Act*** by Clay Risen (2014)

C - 1    C - 2    Barb Selby has a copy

– or –

***An Idea Whose Time Has Come: Two Presidents, Two Parties, and the Battle for the Civil Rights Act of 1964*** by Todd S. Purdum (2014)

U - 1    C - 2

The Civil Rights Act of 1964 was the single most important piece of legislation passed by Congress in American history. It was a broad, epic struggle, a tale of unceasing grassroots activism, ringing speeches, backroom deal-making, and finally, hand-to-hand legislative combat. The Kennedy brothers, Lyndon Johnson, Martin Luther King Jr., Hubert Humphrey and Everett Dirksen, plus many other legislators whose roles are less well known, are the featured players in these highly detailed reports of the process that vividly supports the adage that we don’t really want to know how either laws, or sausage, are made. Both books utilize the same historical resources so you can read either book to get the inside story.

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### MARCH 24

***The Girls of Atomic City: The Untold Story of the Women Who Helped Win World War II*** by Denise Kiernan (2013)

At the height of World War II the US government secretly created a city in Tennessee for the purpose of enriching uranium to fuel the new atom bomb that was being assembled at Los Alamos, NM. Called Oak Ridge, at its peak the city housed more than 75,000 workers, many of them young women, who were told that their work would speed the end of the war, but were never told the true nature of their tasks until the war was officially over. Secrecy was strictly enforced and workers were not allowed to discuss their work or to even speculate about its purpose, either with fellow workers or outsiders. The author interviewed former Oak Ridge workers, now in their 80s and 90s, who described their lives and work during this historic time.

U – 4 + 1 LP    C – 1

### APRIL 28

***Five Days at Memorial: Life and Death in a Storm-Ravaged Hospital*** by Sheri Fink (2013)

A riveting story of life, death, and the choices in between at a New Orleans hospital immediately following Hurricane Katrina. A crisis far worse than the storm itself developed when the hospital lost power, the waters rose, and the city was thrown into panic. Without an evacuation plan or clear lines of authority among the multiple layers of rescue personnel, exhausted doctors and nurses tried to care for extremely sick patients when evacuation appeared unlikely. After several days with no apparent way to evacuate them, the patients deemed least likely to survive were injected with lethal combinations of drugs. In excruciating detail Fink describes the events, people, actions, investigations into allegations of euthanasia, and outcomes of these inquiries, highlighting the ambiguity of the situations and profound difficulty in fully comprehending the horrendous conditions and dilemmas faced by those who experienced them.

U – 2 + 1 Audiobook + 1 eBook    C – 2 + 1 Audiobook + 1 eBook    Barb Selby has a copy

### MAY 26

***River Town: Two Years on the Yangtze*** by Peter Hessler (2001) (2006)

For two years in the 1990s the author, a Peace Corps volunteer, taught English and American literature at a teachers college in Fuling, China. The city, like many others in this ever-evolving country, was heading down a new path of change and growth. Hessler worked hard to learn to understand, speak and write Mandarin Chinese, and when not working directly with his students he spent most of his time interacting with residents in the city and exploring the countryside. *River Town* is an unforgettable portrait of a city that is seeking to understand both what it was and what it someday will be.

U – 1    C – 2

## **ADELANTE BOOK LIST 2014-2015, page 4**

**JUNE 23**

***Behind the Kitchen Door*** by Sarumathi Jayaraman (2013)

Restaurant workers live on some of the lowest wages in America. Poor working conditions such as discriminatory labor practices, exploitation, unsanitary kitchens, and denial of sick leave, have a significantly negative effect on the well-being of restaurant workers and on the health and safety of the people who eat at restaurants. Jayaraman sets out a bold agenda to raise the living standards of the nation's second-largest private sector workforce—and to ensure that dining out is a positive experience on both sides of the kitchen door.

U – 1    C – 2

**JULY 28**

***The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind: Creating Currents of Electricity and Hope*** by William Kamkwamba and Bryan Mealer (2010)

At age 14, in poverty and experiencing famine, a Malawian boy built a windmill to power his family's home. This is a remarkable true story about human inventiveness and its power to overcome crippling adversity. It will inspire anyone who doubts the power of one individual's ability to change his community and better the lives of those around him. Using old science textbooks, scrap metal, tractor parts, bicycle halves, curiosity and determination, Kamkwamba embarked on a daring plan to forge an unlikely contraption, a windmill, that would supply electricity to his family's home and eventually beyond to his village.

U – 1    C – 4 + 1 eBook    Phyllis Cline has a copy

**AUGUST 25**

***Behind the Beautiful Forevers: Life, Death, and Hope in a Mumbai Undercity*** by Katherine Boo (2012)

Annawadi is a makeshift settlement in the shadow of luxury hotels near the Mumbai airport. As India starts to prosper, the residents of Annawadi are hopeful that their own economic status will also rise. A bewildering age of global change and inequality is made human through the dramatic story of individuals and families striving toward a better life despite the forces of caste, religion, power, and economic manipulation that hold them back from full participation in the larger society.

U – 2 + 1 LP + 1 Audiobook    C – 9 + 1 Audiobook + 1 eBook

