

THE POWER OF WORDS: PEOPLE & STORIES

“You think your pain and your heartbreak are unprecedented in the history of the world, but then you read. It was books that taught me that the things that tormented me most were the very things that connected me with all the people who were alive, who had ever been alive.” — James Baldwin

“What can one do but go on talking against every form of despair and deterministic pseudo-scientific absolutism? Connection and comradeship between humane people, and writings of all kinds help.” - Iris Murdoch

“Fiction can do what history doesn’t but should. It can tell the story of ordinary people.” - Jill Lepore

Evergreen Forum has offered this class for a number of years, but, thanks to the participative nature of these sessions (and, perhaps, because of Zoom), it has evolved into an even more compelling experience as, together, we read remarkable short stories that help us make sense of these challenging times, with selections from writers such as Yevgenia Belorusetz, Abdulrazak Gurnah, Franz Kafka, William Trevor, Margaret Atwood, Gabriel Garcia Marquez, Grace Paley, and Jamaica Kincaid. All of these writers’ stories embody the best qualities of enduring literature: rich in artistry, they revel in life’s complications, wonders, and ambiguities. No preparation is required. Copies of each story will be distributed to participants prior to class. After hearing a story read aloud, participants are encouraged to examine the issues and themes; tensions and contrasts; shadows, poetics, and sounds of each story. All ages and backgrounds are welcomed; diversity is critical to meaningful conversations. Join us.

LEADER: Ellen Gilbert has a doctorate in library science and is a trained People and Stories facilitator.

FORMAT: Virtual

MAXIMUM: 18

MONDAYS 10:00 a.m. to noon 8 sessions starting September 26th through November 14th