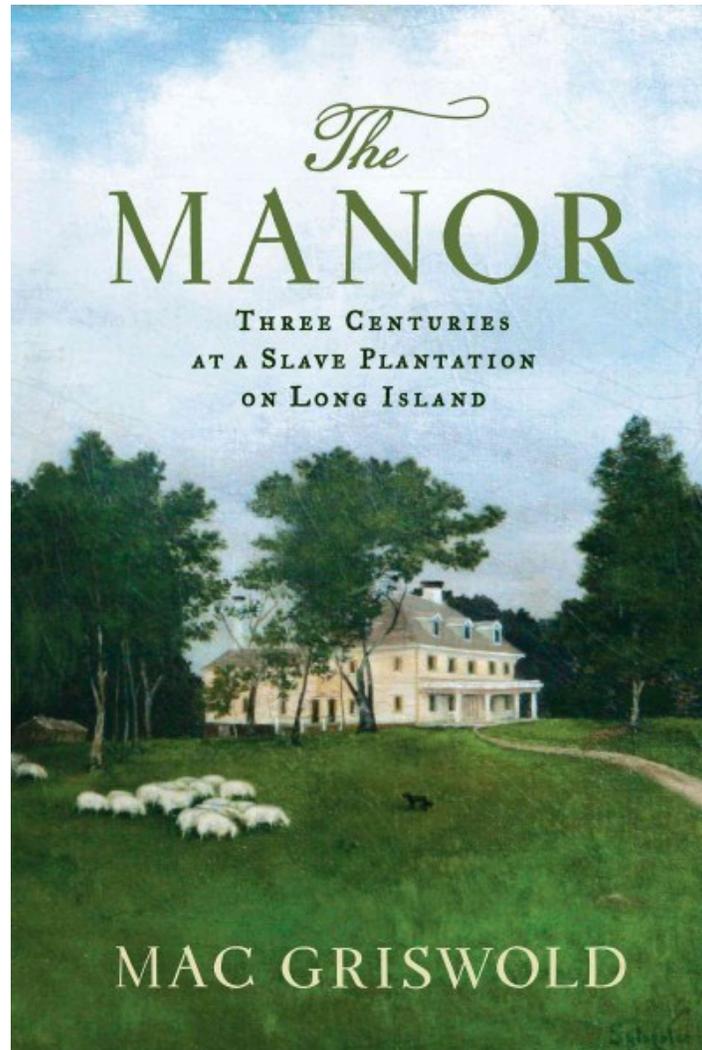


Long Island Reads 2014 Reader's Guide



Long Island Reads is sponsored by
The Nassau Library System &
The Public Libraries in Suffolk County
&
Astoria Federal Savings,
A Corporate Sponsor



About Long Island Reads

 *One Island One Book*



One Book projects are community-wide reading programs. The first **One Book** project was initiated by the Washington Center for the Book in 1998. Since then, the concept has spread across the United States and around the world. Seattle librarian, Nancy Pearl, author of *Book Lust* and *More Book Lust*, and NPR book critic, is the mastermind behind the **One City, One Book** phenomenon. If your city is interested in starting its own program, you can obtain “How To” information by going to Seattle Reads (www.spl.org).

To see a listing of **One City, One Book** projects visit the Library of Congress website at 1.usa.gov/18dxL8x. Projects are listed by state, city and author. While at the Library of Congress site, check out their Center for the Book.

The **Long Island Reads** Committee is a group of librarians and library employees from Nassau and Suffolk counties on Long Island, New York who volunteer to work on this Island-wide reading initiative. Each spring people in Nassau and Suffolk read the same book, participate in discussions of the selection, and enjoy related events in public libraries.

Many Long Island Reads events take place during

National Library Week, April 13-19, 2014

For more information about

Long Island Reads One Island, One Book visit:

www.longislandreads.org

About Mac Griswold

Mac Griswold is an acclaimed cultural landscape historian and writer. Rooted in a childhood spent exploring the castles and towers of lush north central New Jersey, Ms. Griswold went on to study landscape design at the Radcliffe Seminars and horticulture at the New York Botanical Gardens. She is the author of *Washington's Gardens at Mount Vernon*, *Pleasure of the Garden: Images from the Metropolitan Museum of Art* and *The Golden Age of American Gardens: Proud Owners, Private Estates*, with Eleanor Weller. She taught landscape history at Sarah Lawrence College, where she was a recipient of the Noble Chair in Art and Cultural History, and has lectured widely in America and Europe. A Guggenheim fellow, she has written for *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, and *Travel + Leisure*.

Ms. Griswold lived in Sag Harbor for 20 years, and she recently moved to East Hampton. Her first trip to Sylvester Manor in 1984 was a chance encounter with a friend. In 1997, she returned to the Manor and began what would become a labor of love – nearly two decades of immersive research on Shelter Island and the Sylvester family archives, as well as fieldwork in Africa, the West Indies, and Europe. She became fascinated by the unique character of this space; the manor's modest frame belied its dramatic history as the only intact slave plantation north of the Mason Dixon line.

Ms. Griswold currently serves as a board member of The Cultural Landscape Foundation (TCLF) and as a co-chair of the Sag Harbor Tree Fund.



Synopsis

Mac Griswold's *The Manor* is the biography of a uniquely American place that has endured through wars great and small, through fortunes won and lost, through histories bright and sinister — and of the family that has lived there since its founding as a New England slave plantation three and a half centuries ago.

In 1984, the landscape historian Mac Griswold was rowing along a Long Island creek when she came upon a stately yellow house and a garden guarded by looming boxwoods. She instantly knew that boxwoods that large — twelve feet tall, fifteen feet wide — had to be hundreds of years old. So, as it happened, was the house: Sylvester Manor has been held in the same family for eleven generations.

Formerly encompassing all of Shelter Island, a pearl of 8,000 acres caught between the North and South Forks of Long Island, the manor had dwindled to 243 acres. Still, its hidden vault proved to be full of revelations and treasures, including the 1666 charter for the land, and correspondence from Thomas Jefferson. Most notable was the short and steep flight of steps the family had called the “slave staircase,” which would provide clues to the extensive but little-known story of Northern slavery. Alongside a team of archaeologists, Griswold began a dig that would uncover a landscape bursting with stories.

Based on years of archival and field research, as well as voyages to Africa, the West Indies, and Europe, *The Manor* is at once an investigation into forgotten lives and a sweeping drama that captures our history in all its richness and suffering. It is a monumental achievement.



By and About Mac Griswold and *The Manor*

Visit <http://www.macgriswold.com> for more about Ms. Griswold and *The Manor*, or follow her on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/mac.griswold>

Social Media



“Like” *The Manor*’s page on Facebook and keep up to date on events and news about the book: on.fb.me/1d8eyqM



Tweet with Mac Griswold: <https://twitter.com/MacGriswold>

Discussion

- *The New York Times*’ Sam Roberts discusses *The Manor* here: nyti.ms/17BpN38
- Anne Raver reports on the current state of Sylvester Manor here: nyti.ms/1dJOu1j



Find out what readers like you thought of *The Manor* on Goodreads: bit.ly/1aLLtJZ

Reviews

- *The Manor* received a starred review, and was The Pick of the Week in *Publisher’s Weekly*: bit.ly/16gG5gl
- It also was reviewed at length in the *Christian Science Monitor*: bit.ly/12za0za

Multimedia

- Watch Ms. Griswold discuss *The Manor* on BookTV: cs.pn/12CH3pj
- Listen to her being interviewed by WNYC’s Leonard Lopate: wny.cc/1d8dZNX
- Watch Ms. Griswold discuss *The Manor* at the New York Society Library: bit.ly/17BqqK5

Historical

- Visit Sylvester Manor online: <http://sylvestermanor.org/>
- Here is a comprehensive article about Sylvester Manor from Natural History magazine, complete with a photo of Alice and Andrew Fiske! bit.ly/14oG7pF

Suggestions for Reading Critically

Adapted from the Library of Congress Center for the Book Guidelines

The best stories are those that connect to human experience. They reveal an important truth, or provide a profound sense of kinship between reader and writer. Searching for, identifying, and discussing these truths deepens the reader's appreciation of the story. Asking questions, reading carefully, imagining yourself in the story, analyzing style and structure, and searching for personal meaning in a work of literature all enhance the work's value and the discussion potential for your group. Here are some helpful suggestions on how you can become a more critical reader.

Make notes and mark pages as you go. Reading for a book discussion - whether you are the leader or simply a participant - differs somewhat from reading purely for pleasure. As you read a book in preparation for a discussion, ask questions of yourself and mark down pages to which you might want to refer again. Make notes like, "Is this significant?" or "Why does the author include this?" Making notes as you go slows down your reading but saves you the time of searching out important passages later.

Ask tough questions of yourself and the book. Obviously, asking questions of yourself as you read means you don't know the answer yet, and sometimes you never will discover the answers. Don't be afraid to ask hard questions because often the author is presenting difficult issues for that very purpose. Look for questions that may lead to in-depth conversations with your group and make the readings more meaningful.

Pay attention to the authors' messages. As with any skill, critical reading improves with practice. Remember that a good author uses every word in a text deliberately. Try to be aware of what the authors are revealing about themselves and what they want you to learn about life from their perspectives.

Analyze themes. Try to analyze the important themes of a story and to consider the premises with which the author started. Imagine an author mulling over the beginnings of the story, asking, "what if" questions.

Get to know the characters. When you meet the characters in the book, place yourself at the scene. Think of them as you do the people around you. Judge them. Think about their faults and their motives. What would it be like to interact with them? Are the tone and style of their dialogue authentic? Read portions aloud to get to know the voices of the characters.

Notice the structure of the stories as well as the organization of the entire book. Sometimes the structure of the book illustrates an important concept or helps to create a mood. Notice how the editor structured the book. How do the stories relate to each other? How are the individual stories and selections structured?

Who are the narrators? How does the sequence of events unfold to create the mood of the story? Is it written in flashbacks? Does the sequence of actions make sense to you?

Make comparisons to other stories and works. Compare the book and the stories to others that have a similar theme or style. Often, themes run through an author's works that are more fully realized by comparison. Comparing one author's work to that of another can help you solidify your opinions, as well as illuminate qualities you may otherwise miss.

Suggested Book Discussion Questions

Provided by Lee Fertitta, Port Washington Public Library

1. Were you surprised to learn about a slave-owning family plantation on Long Island?
2. What, if any, were the differences in the treatment of slaves on Barbados and Shelter Island?
3. Slaves were essential to plantations in the Caribbean and the United States, yet the slaves were poorly kept and severely restrained. How was this good business practice?
4. The author's discussion of possible premarital sex between Grizzell and Nathaniel and others once they are engaged seems to contradict our understanding of Puritan ways. Or does it?
5. The Sylvesters converted to Quakerism in the late 1650's and made their home and island a sanctuary for persecuted Quakers. Yet they continued to own slaves. Was this hypocritical?
6. How did Native Americans coexist with the Sylvesters throughout their history?
7. Shelter Island was a sovereign state, according to the Sylvesters. How did they manage to keep it separate?
8. Use of a "dark room" as treatment for a mentally unstable Mary Sylvester is suggested by the author. What other treatments for mental illness were used at that time?
9. The American Revolution found the descendants of Nathaniel and Grizzell on the side of the patriots. What issues brought them to join the revolt?
10. Sylvester Manor stands today, representative of all the generations who owned and lived in it. It is also representative of Long Island's history. How should it best be remembered?

If You Liked *The Manor*...

If you enjoyed reading *The Manor*, you may want to check out some of the following books, movies, articles and websites.

This list was developed by librarians on the Long Island Reads Committee with the assistance of the NoveList PLUS database. To find these books and articles, visit your local library in person or online in Suffolk at www.live-brary.com and in Nassau at www.nassaulibrary.org.

Books

Sons of Providence: The Brown Brothers, the Slave Trade, and the American Revolution, Charles Rappleye (2006): Examines the complicated history of the Rhode Island Brown brothers, responsible for much of Rhode Island's colonial prosperity, who wound up on opposing sides of the slave trade issue in the early years of the nation.

Slavery before Race: Europeans, Africans, and Indians at Long Island's Sylvester Manor Plantation, 1651-1884 (Early American Places), Katherine Howlett Hayes (2013): Hayes draws on artifacts and extensive archival material to present a rare picture of northern slavery at Sylvester Manor where whites, Africans and Native Americans worked side by side. (Amazon).

Washington's Gardens at Mount Vernon, Mac Griswold (Author), Roger Foley (Photographer) (1999)

*The Golden Age of American Gardens: Proud Owners * Private Estates * 1890-1940*, Mac Griswold and Eleanor Weller (1991)

Sugar in the Blood: A Family's Story of Slavery and Empire (Vintage), Andrea Stuart (2013): A history of the importance of the growth of the sugar trade and its social ramifications as seen through the lens of one family's story.

Sugar Changed the World: A Story of Magic, Spice, Slavery, Freedom, and Science, Marc Aronson and Marina Budhos (2010): A book for young adults which provides extensive documentation of the brutal growth of the worldwide sugar trade.

Slaves in the Family, Edward Ball (1998): Journalist Edward Ball meticulously documents the history of his family since 1698 and learns that not only were there slave owners in his past: there were slave traders too.

The Slave Trade, Hugh Thomas (1997): A comprehensive chronicle of the Atlantic slave trade, from 1440 to 1870.

Rough Crossings: The Slaves, the British, and the American Revolution, Simon Schama (2007): Examines a little-known aspect of the Revolutionary War: the support escaped African slaves offered British troops against the colonists in an effort to gain freedom.

If You Liked *The Manor*...

If you enjoyed reading *The Manor*, you may want to check out some of the following books, movies, articles and websites.

This list was developed by librarians on the Long Island Reads Committee with the assistance of the NoveList PLUS database. To find these books and articles, visit your local library in person or online in Suffolk at www.live-brary.com and in Nassau at www.nassaulibrary.org.

Links

Sylvester Manor Site

(<http://sylvestermanor.org>)

Visit Sylvester Manor online to find out about its new incarnation as an organic farm, historic plantation and vibrant arts and education center.

Suffolk County Archaeological Association

(<http://www.scaa-ny.org/films/film-information>)

The SCAA's two films, *The Sugar Connection: Holland, Barbados, England, Shelter Island* and *The Manors of Long Island* deal with the development of the manor system on Long Island and, specifically, the history of Sylvester Manor.

The Fales Library Special Collections

(bit.ly/1azC0sC)

This finding aid for the Fales library's extensive archives relating to Sylvester Manor contains a brief, excellent, summary of the Manor's history and indexes the enormous number of documents contained in the collection.

Northeast Historical Archaeology (NEHA)

(bit.ly/1f4YaHx)

An entire digitized issue of the NEHA, devoted to the archaeological exploration of Sylvester Manor, is available through the Digital Commons at Buffalo State University.

The Long Island Reads 2014 Committee

Samantha Alberts	Suffolk Cooperative Library System	Candace Hope	Huntington Library
Diane Bondi	Merrick Public Library	Linda Judenberg	Book Talk Leader
Deborah Cunningham	Harborfields Public Library	Thérèse Nielsen	Huntington Public Library
Donna Diamond	Book Talk Leader	Grace O'Connor	West Islip Public Library
Diane Eidelman	Suffolk Cooperative Library System	Elizabeth Olesh	Nassau Library System
Lee Fertitta	Port Washington Public Library	Marcia Olsen	Levittown Public Library
Maureen Garvey	Bellmore Memorial Library	Loretta Piscatella	Middle Country Public Library
Beth Gates	Rogers Memorial Library	Janet Schneider	Great Neck Public Library
Ellen Getreu	Hewlett-Woodmere Library	Sarah Siegel	Rockville Centre Library
Lauren Gilbert	Sachem Public Library	Tracey Simon	Floral Park Public Library
		Lissetty Thomas	Brentwood Public Library

Deborah Clark Cunningham, Long Island Reads Suffolk Co-Chair, Harborfields Public Library

Lee Fertitta, Long Island Reads Nassau Co-Chair, Port Washington Public Library

Janet Schneider, Long Island Reads Nassau Co-Chair, Great Neck Public Library

Reader's Guide compiled by: Beth Gates, Rogers Memorial Library;

Thérèse Purcell Nielsen, Huntington Public Library; and

Lee Fertitta, Port Washington Public Library.

Special thanks to Astoria Federal Savings



**Contact your public library for more information about
Long Island Reads events during
National Library Week, April 13-19, 2014**

Long Island Reads 2014 Evaluation

1. Have you read, or do you plan to read, *The Manor*? Yes ___ No ___.

2. Have you visited the Long Island Reads website at www.longislandreads.org?

Yes ___ No ___

3. What Library do you belong to? _____

4. Please let us know what you thought about today's program. _____

5. Have you participated in any Long Island Reads events in the past? Yes ___ No ___

If yes, which one(s)? _____

6. Are you in a Book Club? Yes ___ No ___

If you are in a Book Club, please tell us a little about your club: (For example: How often and where do you meet? How do you select the books? How many members? What type of books do you read?)

7. If you would like to suggest an author or title for Long Island Reads 2015, please do so below. Please tell us why you think this would be a good choice.

Your name (optional) _____

Are you a library employee? Yes ___ No ___

Do you reside in Nassau__ or Suffolk__

Please return this form to a member of the LI Reads committee here today or to:

Deborah Clark Cunningham

Head of Adult Reference

Harborfields Public Library

31 Broadway

Greenlawn, NY 11740

Thank you for participating in Long Island Reads!