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## Reading, Writing and Republic Republic Coffee kicks off series of writers forums June 17

MEMPHIS—(June 14, 2010) Republic Coffee will kick off "Reading, Writing and Republic," an eight-week series of forums beginning this Thursday evening. First up is Memphian Cal Bray, author of *If Those Shoes Could Talk*, Thursday, June 17 from 7:30 pm until 8:30 pm. Other writers in the series include Rebecca Skloot, New York Times best-selling author of *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks*, and Memphis music legend George Klein, writer of *Elvis: My Best Man*.

The forums are open to the public and attendees are encouraged to come with questions for the authors.

"It has always been my belief that a coffee shop should be a reflection of the people who use it," said Fitz Dearmore, proprietor of Republic Coffee. "Many of our patrons are literature lovers, and some are aspiring authors themselves. We wanted to provide a space where they could meet successful authors and learn more about the process of writing and getting published."

The full slate of authors is below. Each forum will be held at Republic Coffee and will begin at 7:30 pm.

**Thursday, June 17—Cal Bray, *If Those Shoes Could Talk*.** *If Those Shoes Could Talk* is a toe-twitching story of a man who discovers a smelly truth; his shoes are talking to him. Slip on your favorite slippers and jump feet-first into this hilarious tale of wacky shoes and a man's quest to discover why on earth he can communicate with footwear. You will laugh, cry, scream, and gasp in fear as you discover what your shoes might be saying about you. One thing is for certain; you will never look at your shoes the same way again.

Author Cal Bray has been a teacher, songwriter, and worship leader and is the writer of *Growing with God Together* as well as the inspirational song, 'Follow Me, I heard Jesus Say.' Cal presently lives in Tennessee with his wife and continues to travel and share more experiences for all to enjoy.

**Thursday, June 24—Rebecca Skloot, *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks*.** Her name was Henrietta Lacks, but scientists know her as HeLa. She was a poor Southern tobacco farmer who worked the same land as her slave ancestors, yet her cells—taken without her knowledge—became one of the most important tools in medicine. The first “immortal” human cells grown in culture, they are still alive today, though she has been dead for more than sixty years. If you could pile all HeLa cells ever grown onto a scale, they’d weigh more than 50 million metric tons—as much as a hundred Empire State Buildings. HeLa cells were vital for developing the polio vaccine; uncovered secrets of cancer, viruses, and the effects of the atom bomb; helped lead to important advances like in vitro fertilization, cloning, and gene mapping; and have been bought and sold by the billions.

Yet Henrietta Lacks remains virtually unknown, buried in an unmarked grave.

Now Rebecca Skloot takes us on an extraordinary journey, from the “colored” ward of Johns Hopkins Hospital in the 1950s to stark white laboratories with freezers full of HeLa cells; from Henrietta’s small, dying hometown of Clover, Virginia—a land of wooden slave quarters, faith healings, and voodoo—to East Baltimore today, where her children and grandchildren live, and struggle with the legacy of her cells.

Rebecca Skloot is a science writer whose work has appeared in *The New York Times Magazine*; *O, The Oprah Magazine*; *Discover*; and many other publications. She specializes in narrative science writing and has explored a wide range of topics, including goldfish surgery, tissue ownership rights, race and medicine, food politics, and packs of wild dogs in Manhattan. She is the guest editor of [The Best American Science Writing 2011](#), a contributing editor at *Popular Science* magazine, and has worked as a correspondent for WNYC’s *Radiolab* and PBS’s *Nova ScienceNOW*.

**Thursday, July 1**—Off for holiday weekend.

**Thursday, July 8—Dennis McDougal, *Five Easy Decades*.** With the publication of the Jack Nicholson biography *Five Easy Decades*, Dennis McDougal has authored a total of nine books and hundreds of newspaper and magazine articles in a career that has spanned over 40 years. Currently, he is working on *The Acid Chronicles*, a documentary film about the history and renaissance of LSD as a powerful tool in the treatment of mental illness.

McDougal is also researching a new biography titled *Things Have Changed: The Lives of Bob Dylan*.

Before he began covering movies and media for the Los Angeles Times in 1983 and, more recently, the New York Times, McDougal was a staff writer at the Riverside Press-Enterprise (1973-1977) and the Long Beach Press-Telegram (1977-1981). A UCLA graduate, McDougal holds a Bachelor’s in English and a Master’s in Journalism.

**Thursday, July 15—Latrivia Nelson, *Dmitry’s Closet*.** Urban Fiction and Interracial Romance readers nationwide immediately flocked to the bestselling multicultural phenomenon released in January of 2010, *Dmitry’s Closet*, a racy action-adventure about a Russian mobster and an African-American virginal heroine battling for their love in the Southern city of Memphis, Tennessee. Author Latrivia S. Nelson sat on internet bestseller lists across the country for over 4 weeks as people talked about the fusion of two popular but distinct genres. Now Nelson is dropping the second book in the Medlov Crime Family Series, *Dmitry’s Royal Flush: Rise of the Queen* on July 5, 2010 and fans nationwide are excited.

Nelson graduated from LeMoyne-Owen College (Memphis, TN) with honors obtaining a Bachelors Degree in business administration with a concentration in management (2003), Strayer University

(Washington, DC) obtaining her MBA with a concentration in marketing (2007) and is currently pursuing her Ph.D. in Criminal Justice at Capella University with a concentration in organized crime.

*Dmitry's Royal Flush: Rise of the Queen* will be available online at [www.dmitrysroyalflush.com](http://www.dmitrysroyalflush.com) and [www.latrivianelson.com](http://www.latrivianelson.com) on July 5, 2010 and will be available online at amazon.com, barnesandnoble.com and over 1,000 other outlets on August 10, 2010.

**Thursday, July 22—Jennifer Chandler, *Simply Salads*.** Author and Chef Jennifer Chandler, delivers over 100 creative recipes you can make in minutes—showing that anyone can create a gourmet salad by simply picking up salad mix and adding your favorite ingredients. Chandler's salad masterpieces also include dressing recommendations, recipes, menu ideas and nutritional information. All the recipes are accompanied by stunning photos of each salad. From the Classic Caesar Salad with Herb Croutons to the Mandarin Chicken Salad with Toasted Sesame Vinaigrette, these recipes are guidelines to getting you started on creating your own satisfying salads with your favorite ingredients.

Chandler's new book, *Simply Suppers*, will be available September, 2010.

A contributing writer to several magazines such as *MidSouth Magazine*, *Nashville Home & Garden*, *Memphis Magazine*, *Edible Memphis*, *Real Food*, *Pilates Style* and *Delta Magazine*, Jennifer has also been a contributing food columnist for *The Commercial Appeal* (Memphis' newspaper). In addition, Jennifer has been featured on the Food Network in two episodes of *Dinner Impossible* as well as on *Martha Stewart's Every Day Food* XM/Sirius Radio Program.

**Thursday, July 29—Taylor Grey, *A Wig for Ally*.** When Ally is diagnosed with leukemia, her entire world changes. She is forced to deal with mature issues at a young age—being stuck in a hospital, chemotherapy and the psychological effects of hair loss. With the help of her parents, a new friend, and a wig shop owner named Miss Harriet, Ally begins to fight back. She begins visualizing new, creative ways to fight the rogue cells causing her harm. When Ally goes into remission, she knows she is very different from the girl she was before cancer. She has become someone completely different, something even better. By keeping her promises to Harriet, Ally learns to believe in her own strength and the gift of giving back.

Memphis's own Taylor Grey earned a bachelor of arts in psychology from the University of South Florida in Tampa, Florida. In addition to psychoanalyzing her friends and writing children's books, Taylor is also an accomplished pilot, avid runner and occasional triathlete.

**Thursday, August 5—George Klein, *Elvis: My Best Man*.** When George Klein was an eighth grader at Humes High, he couldn't have known how important the new kid with the guitar—the boy named Elvis—would later become in his life. But from the first time GK (as he was nicknamed by Elvis) heard this kid sing, he knew that Elvis Presley was someone extraordinary. During Elvis's rise to fame and throughout the wild swirl of his remarkable life, Klein was a steady presence and one of Elvis's closest and most loyal friends until his untimely death in 1977.

In *Elvis: My Best Man*, a heartfelt, entertaining, and long-awaited contribution to our understanding of Elvis Presley and the early days of rock 'n' roll, George Klein writes with great affection for the friend he knew—about who the King of Rock 'n' Roll really was and how he acted when the stage lights were off. This fascinating chronicle of boundary-breaking and music-making through one of the most intriguing and dynamic stretches of American history overflows with insights and anecdotes from someone who was in the middle of it all. From the good times at Graceland to hanging out with Hollywood stars to butting heads with Elvis's iron-handed manager, Colonel Tom Parker, to making

sure that Elvis's legacy is fittingly honored, GK was a true friend of the King and a trailblazer in the music industry in his own right.

**Thursday, August 12—G. Wayne Dowdy, *Hidden History of Memphis*.** Step inside the fascinating annals of the Bluff City's history and discover the Memphis that only few know. G. Wayne Dowdy, longtime archivist for the Memphis Public Library, examines the history and culture of the Mid-South during its most important decades. Well-known faces like Clarence Saunders, Elvis Presley and W.C. Handy are joined by some of the more obscure characters from the past, like the Memphis gangster who inspired one of William Faulkner's most famous novels, the local Boy Scout who captured German spies during World War I, the Memphis radio station that pioneered wireless broadcasting and so many more. Also included are the previously unpublished private papers and correspondence of former mayor E.H. Crump, giving us new insight and a front-row seat to the machine that shaped Tennessee politics in the twentieth century.

**Thursday, August 19—Richard Bausch, *Something is Out There*.** *Following his award-winning war novel Peace, author Richard Bausch is back writing short stories, fixing his gaze again on small-town American home life. Only now, there's more violence.*

*Bausch, who has written eight short story collections and 11 novels over a 30-year career, has long focused on the quiet troubles of domestic America, but he says his new book takes his work to menacing new heights.*

*In Something Is Out There, a collection of 11 short stories, one tale follows a naive kid running from a small-time drug deal gone wrong. In another, a young man's crush on his older brother's wife ends in a drunken and bloody fight. (Edmonton Journal)*

An acknowledged Master of the short story form, Richard Bausch's work has appeared in *The Atlantic Monthly*, *Esquire*, *Harper's*, *The New Yorker*, *Playboy*, *The Southern Review*, *New Stories From the South*, *The Best American Short Stories*, *O. Henry Prize Stories* and *The Pushcart Prize Stories*; and they have been widely anthologized, including *The Granta Book of the American Short Story*, and *The Vintage Book of the Contemporary American Short Story*. The Modern Library published *The Selected Stories of Richard Bausch* in March, 1996. He has won two National Magazine Awards, a Guggenheim Fellowship, and a Lila-Wallace Reader's Digest Fund Writer's Award, the Award of the American Academy of Arts and Letters, and The 2004 PEN/Malamud Award for Excellence in the Short Story. In 1995 he was elected to the Fellowship of Southern Writers. In 1999 he signed on as co-editor, with RV Cassill, of *The Norton Anthology of Short Fiction*. Since Cassill's passing, in 2002, he is the sole editor of that prestigious anthology. He currently serves as The Moss Chair of Excellence in the Writing Program at The University of Memphis.

Founded in Midtown Memphis in 1993, Republic Coffee is a privately owned and operated café whose main goal is to bring to market world class coffees and exceptional food. We are purveyors of the world coffee markets and roast bean varieties locally. Republic Coffee is dedicated to the community, striving to support charities and organizations through service in our spaces. Among the numerous organizations Republic Coffee has supported are The Memphis/Mid-South Affiliate of Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure, BRIDGES Inc., Shelby Farms' Down to Earth Day, The Memphis Farmers Market and The Neighborhood School.

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