



ONLINE

GREAT BOOKS

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**IGNORANT MEN
RAISE QUESTIONS
THAT WISE MEN
ANSWERED A
THOUSAND YEARS
AGO.**

- JOHANN WOLFGANG VON GOETHE

**WELCOME TO
OGB@Home.**

Thank you for committing to taking the Great Books journey with us. I've found this work changes everyone who is willing to take it on. It makes us more rigorous thinkers. It makes us better citizens. It teaches us how to live a better life. I know that if you work hard enough, you'll agree with me.

A GREAT BOOKS STORY

I've always been a reader. When I was a teenager, I read a number of texts from the Great Books. I tried to read some Plato, Descartes, Aristotle, and some others. Reading those texts on my own wasn't just difficult, it was impossible. I was in Catoosa, Oklahoma reading them with no context, no background, and no one to discuss them with. I failed.

Years later, I've come to recognize significant deficiencies in my own education. My fund of knowledge is far from complete and there are entire areas of thought, philosophy, and history of which I have little awareness. My readings and other studies have made me face the fact that I lack basic insights and understanding that even mediocre writers and citizens had a mere 100 years ago. In fact, upon beginning

to read Plato, I found that I couldn't REALLY read. I was trained in "Skimming and Scanning." I was great at perusing a document and getting the "gist" of it. Close reading was beyond me. Also, in spite of spending about \$85,000 with an elite private elementary school, I saw my children's education was going to be incomplete as well. As a result, my wife Charity and I decided to take responsibility for their education by homeschooling them.

In order to learn how to best educate my children, Riley and Evan, I have spent an enormous amount of time studying pedagogy, educational systems and curricula. In doing so, I discovered, among other resources, "The Lost Tools of Learning" by Dorothy Sayers. (You'll find this in the Appendix.) In reading her and others, I have found overwhelming

evidence that the leaders of thought and progress in the human race have always been educated in the classical liberal arts, namely the trivium and quadrivium. The trivium is the first three liberal arts are grammar, logic and rhetoric. The quadrivium is comprised of arithmetic, geometry, music, and astronomy.

Virtually every thinker of the enlightenment and even Mark Zuckerberg of Facebook come out of this classical education method. This is widely recognized by the “privileged” as the gold standard for creating powerful leaders and thinkers. Schools like Eaton, Oxford, Harvard, Columbia, Bard’s, St. John’s, and old William and Mary know this and have trained giants for centuries. (The St. John’s College program is in Appendix B. Have a look.)

Secondly, these thinkers, whether in formal schools or not (Ben Franklin’s Junto, for example), have studied the liberal arts by reading great books and engaging in dialectic with their peers. This kind of work is what fed the leaders of The Enlightenment, men like Jefferson, Rousseau, and Adam Smith. It creates the mental agility that creative new ideas like those of Newton, Schopenhauer, and Darwin require. At its most basic level, classical liberal arts education teaches normal folks like me to be analytical, articulate, difficult to manipulate, and deeply aware of our place in history - all of history, not just history from 1776-1945.

A trip to Ireland and England in 2013 and another to colonial Williamsburg, VA (the seat of this learning in the New World) helped highlight for me how powerful this education can be. I also began to suspect that it is no longer commonly available

because it makes normal people far too dangerous to power structures. Ask King George III about this.

I discussed all of this with a good friend of mine, Jim Furr. He expressed his frustration with the irrationality, deadly metaphysics, and disgusting politics of our era and expressed his own need to return to classical reason and rationality. He suggested that we form a Socratic seminar ourselves.

So we did.

We based it on the Great Books program as espoused by Mortimer J. Adler. We now meet to discuss Plato, Aristotle and the other greats in a seminar in my home over the best hors d'oeuvres and drink I can find.

We've found that the great thinkers and writers aren't "too hard." The

anti-intellectualism in our culture has taught us that Aristotle, Bacon, Plato, Sophocles, Nietzsche and the like are inaccessible to mere mortals. On the contrary, they are the best writers the human race has offered, they write very well, and they generally give us everything we need to understand them. The key is to go slow, reread, self-examine, and stay with the task.

The OGB Story

In conducting my home group, I used the Great Books Program as promoted by Mortimer J. Adler and Robert Hutchins of the University of Chicago. In a nutshell, Adler and Hutchins advocated for reading the books of what they saw as the "Western Canon" in chronological order. (They also have a ten year reading plan that is not in chronological order. I believe it's inferior.) In reading the books in the order they were written, we get to eavesdrop on what Hutchins calls "The Great Conversation,"

the conversation carried out in writing between the greatest minds the world has ever known.

By reading these books in order, we are essentially reading the books that influenced the thinking of subsequent writers, so we come to their works with much of the same background as the writer himself had. For example, Aristotle studied Plato VERY closely; in fact, he attended his school. If one reads Aristotle before reading and studying Plato, one is at a grave disadvantage. By reading Plato first, we are more ready to take on the ideas and writings of Aristotle, Aquinas, Kant, and the rest. After all, Alfred North Whitehead tells us that the safest general characterization of the philosophical tradition is that it consists of a series of footnotes to Plato.”

Knowledge scaffolds upon knowledge. We must read Homer to more fully understand

the tragedies, we need to read the tragedies to more fully understand the mind of the ancient Greek in order to more closely follow Socrates’ questions about justice, and so on. To miss a link in the chain is to put ourselves at a disadvantage and to overreach. Our knowledge and comprehension builds linearly and logically.

I’m a sought-after strength coach and deal with challenges in the world of strength training every day. I put novice weightlifters through “linear progression.” The novice accrues strength with every session under the barbell. In a particular lift, a novice can put 5 pounds more on the bar each session. Often, they can do this for months. If you graph the trainee’s ability to express force over time, we find that the novice gains strength in a linear progression. We do the same thing with these books. I mentioned that we use an “intellectual linear progression” in some social media

posts some time ago, and that idea resonated with my barbell training friends. They know that you can't put a 405 lb. barbell on the back of a beginner. They also know that with diligence, dedication, and proper preparation, most healthy men can squat 405 pounds. This Intellectual Linear Progression is no different. When the reader starts at the beginning and progresses through the canon in a linear fashion, he finds that what was once incomprehensible is well within reach.

We may not ascend to the heights of Locke, Freud, or Newton, but with diligence, work, and care, we can take part in their thoughts and reconcile them with our own, becoming mentally stronger in the process. Like strength training, this is work we can all benefit from, even if we aren't the most talented or gifted students. I know, because I'm not.

These books are a self-evident canon. If you happen upon a book in the canon, Nietzsche, for example, you'll find that he discusses the works of Schopenhauer in depth. That might then cause the reader to look up Schopenhauer. Upon reading him, the reader sees his work on Kant. A deeper study of Kant will lead to Copernicus, then to Aristotle, through him to Plato, and back to Homer. Time and again, we find that these thinkers use the work of those who came before them to reach greater and greater heights. That's why we use the Great Books list. Those who've worked the program before us have discovered these connections and charted the course for us.

Most people cannot do this alone, I couldn't. We often lack the confidence, patience, and individual drive necessary to forge ahead into the canon, the books and ideas that are the underpinnings of Western thought. Readers often have questions

about which translation to read, how to organize and lead a group, and most importantly, who will be in their group and how to find them.

OGB@Home will help. Enroll your group members with us and we'll take care of the rest, organizing your meetings, recommending the best texts, scheduling weekly reading goals, helping with seminar host planning, and much more. Our goal is to make this hard work as easy as possible for you and your friends.

OGB seminars provide us with a way to do what the greats have always done. You'll gather in a group of fellow travellers to practice dialectic, the art of critical examination of the truth of an opinion. In the Socratic seminar, each participant is forced to criticize his own ideas and beliefs ruthlessly until he absolutely knows why he believes what he believes AND maybe

more importantly, learns how much he doesn't know. In the Socratic seminar we define our terms and agree on our evidence. We must support our premises, or be shown how we are wrong. This process leads to steely intellectual rigor, and helps us develop the rhetorical skills required to defend our thoughts and ideas.

THE OGB LOGO

The right half of the logo is the right hemisphere of the brain. This is the seat of creativity. The upper left corner is a page from a book. The lower left corner is an anvil. Karl Schudt says, "The Great Books are the anvil against which we form our minds into tools better suited for living." That idea was so good we had to build the logo and our program around it.

GETTING STARTED



Technology

Once your Seminar Leader signs up the Meeting Participants, we send the entire group reading reminders to your email based on the chosen Seminar Date you have collectively selected. You'll want to login to my.onlinegreatbooks.com for plenty of useful info such as reader guides, leader guides, links to the recommended translation for each book, and additional resources that you'll find useful for maintaining a healthy home book group. If you use an online calendar, you have the option to sync your reading schedule which we highly recommend.

The emails will be a huge help in guiding you through that week's reading, so don't junk those. We don't want to spoon feed this to anybody, but we'll ask questions in the emails that prompt you to get a little more from the reading than you would going in cold.

Roles in the Group

MEETING PARTICIPANT

If the seminar has any value, that value exists because it's done in a group, so everyone needs to be on the same page. You are there to talk about ideas, investigate the book, and investigate each other. That's why it's critical that as a participant, you want to be getting better in seminar each and every meeting. We are all clumsy in our first meeting and you don't quite know what to say. That's fine. That's to be expected. That means you're self-aware.

You just need to approach this in order to understand the text better. When you go to the meeting, your goal should be to have a better mastery of each of these books than you did at the previous book.

And you need to speak more clearly and more concisely every time. You need to listen more carefully to your fellow group members. You need to be critical about yourself and your performance because everybody there is depending on each other to make the thing good. Having an attitude of improvement as you go into these meetings is SO important.

You also need to do the reading. Even if you don't like it, you have to do the reading.

The program is set up so that you can get the reading done in 30 minutes a day, six days a week. That's not a huge ask. You can find 15 minutes in the park a lot before you go in the building in the morning, 15 minutes after you choke down your sandwich for lunch. Get that in. And if you do the reading, you write in your book and you take some time before the meeting to think about what you've read, to look at your notes, that's probably going to be enough to get you on the path.

MEETING LEADER

The discussion leader is the first among equals. This person will help lead the discussion but they will not actually be your teacher. This person is responsible for asking good questions, meaning the discussion leader will likely end up knowing the text better than everybody else.

There's something about that performance, that pressure, that's put on us when we lead a meeting. Still, the leader will have to do more prep than everybody else if they care about doing a good job.

During the meeting, there are several responsibilities. The leader should start and stop the meeting right on time. When our group members tell their loved ones they are going to be away for a book group that lasts two hours, they can trust that they will be home when they say they will.

The discussion leader is going to be a careful listener. They should ask socratic questions so that the people in the group clarify their thoughts and speak more clearly. It's a very responsible position, though it doesn't have to be brutal. So, if you're really interested in knowing these books and being changed by them, running the meeting is where you need to be.

Seminars

What Seminar is not.

IT IS NOT A CLASS.

Your Seminar Leader has nothing to teach you. He's not a sage or a guru. Plato is frustrating to read because he never tells us things. This is intentional. He wanted to produce thinkers, not disciples. The point isn't what I think or even what the authors think: it's what you think, or rather that you think.

IT IS NOT A LECTURE.

See above. Your Seminar Leader is not going to tell you about the *Iliad* and what you should think about it. Great books are great, says Hutchins, partly because they contain within themselves that which you need in order to interpret them. It's up to you.

IT IS NOT A BOOK GROUP.

In our experience, book groups aren't really about the books. The book is an occasion for a social gathering, where people drink wine and talk about anything but the book, which none

of the participants have actually read. This is a Great Books Seminar, and we will talk about the book.

What it is.

AN ENCOUNTER WITH GENIUS.

We all know the value of keeping company with really smart people. It's like being the worst singer in a choir: everyone else elevates your performance. The authors we read are really smart people, the smartest that the human race has produced, or at least the smartest ones that wrote books.

A CONVERSATION.

There is, hidden in this word, the Latin word for "turn." It's a turning around with others. It's not a casual thing, but a deep thing. Hutchins says that it is the core of Western culture. I think that's true, and you can see even in the *Iliad* the questioning of the accepted wisdom and stories of the past. Helen knows she's a plaything of the gods, and knows that it isn't fair, and even calls out Aphrodite to her face. Helen can't do anything about it, but we can read about her and reflect and question.

A PREREQUISITE FOR GOOD CITIZENSHIP.

To be a free human being requires us to take responsibility for the governance of the society, to play a part in deciding how to get to the good life, in balancing the goods of the individual and the state. To be able to do this requires that you know the Trivium, the three liberal arts of grammar, logic, and rhetoric. Grammar is how to read, logic is how to think, and rhetoric is how to speak beautifully. Reading the Great Books will test and refine your skills so that you can take your place in a democratic society. Imagine how many voters make their decisions based on 30 second TV spots or Facebook memes, because they are unable to do anything else. No society can survive that. We need better thinkers.

FUN.

You are a human being, not an animal, and you are capable of wonder. To know is a self-sufficient good. This is why we like gossip and surfing the internet: knowing stuff is fun. Knowing stuff is also hard, which is why, rather than studying and engaging in conversation about great books, we typically gossip and surf the internet. But since you are human, you ought to do that which is uniquely human, exercising that which is the best part of you. The best books,

the best movies, the best music, or the best time with friends
always involves thinking at a high level.

HOW WE RECOMMEND YOU DO IT.

Below, you'll find the seminar standards of conduct we provided to our members of the original OGB seminars. We found that seminars that do not adhere to the below standards are not successful. The danger in not adhering to good standards is a seminar that bogs down in partisan discussions of current events, anger, or worse, dead ends.

Thanks to Karl Schudt for his work to develop these standards for the work we have done with thousands at OnlineGreatBooks.com. You need standards for your seminar. Karl has done a great job with these, but we would never presume to impose standards on your group. Consider using ours for a starting point for your group.

PREREQUISITES FOR SEMINAR MEMBERS

TRUTH

All our readers must believe in the existence of an objective truth. We do not have to agree on what this truth is, or even claim to know what it is. We **MUST** believe it exists and desire to know it. Any who deny there is an absolute truth can never answer a Socratic question with a definitive answer. This is the death of dialectic.

ACCESSIBILITY

All our readers must believe the truth is accessible to all people of empathy, good-will, and rationality, to know the truth does not require a certain type of person beyond this.

Consequently, we believe we do not need a committee of all walks of life to access the truth, just a few of empathy, good-will, and rationality.

SPEECH

All our readers are practicing rhetoric in seminar. Rhetoric is the art of speaking convincingly or beautifully about a subject. As a result of using seminar to *practice*, we will make errors. We'll mis-speak. We'll be inelegant. We'll push boundaries. This is good. In order to foster this practice, no one will be allowed to dictate what words we can or cannot use. In support of this no pronouns will be dictated, no "spicy words" will be prohibited. This is a genuine free speech zone. We'll not put words in, or take words out of each other's mouths.

SEMINAR STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

You've read the book. You should come ready to talk about it. If there was a moment that you loved, bring it up. Better yet, if there was a part of the book you hated, bring it up. The things we hate reveal something about us that we had better talk about.

Your Seminar Host will start with an introductory question, but where it goes from there is up to you. His job is to referee. He breaks up fights and also drags us back to the text. You've all been to conferences where a questioner will ask a question that is a half-hour speech about his or her own life, followed by, "What do you think of that?" We won't do that. Stick to the text.

Politics is not off limits, but keep it polite. We prefer only to talk about dead politicians. If you want to compare something to Hillary or Donald, may I suggest Queen Victoria and Bismarck instead? Where we go is up to you! You are all very intelligent and experienced people, in whose company we are honored to be, and you have interesting things to say about life, the universe, and everything. We're looking forward to learning with you.

SEMINAR PROCEDURES AND STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

FRIENDSHIP: dialectic requires good will from all participants. The goal is truth, but the means is the discussion. We attack ideas, not persons.

A SEMINAR IS A SAFE PLACE FOR UNSAFE IDEAS: If it makes you uncomfortable, it's probably something you ought to talk about.

NO MENTION OF LIVING POLITICIANS. Politics can cause people to hate each other: please talk about ideas, not about politicians. If you must, make sure that the politicians mentioned are dead.

NO DISCUSSION OF CURRENT EVENTS. Current events are divisive: we want to keep the focus on ideas, and not get distracted by emotions. The seminar is about head, not heart.

NO NAME CALLING, AD HOMINEM OR ANY PERSONAL ATTACKS.

YOUR GROUP SEMINAR HOST IS FINAL ARBITER OF ALL
QUESTIONS OF CONDUCT IN YOUR SEMINAR. VIOLATIONS OF
THESE POLICIES WILL RESULT IN BEING REMOVED FROM THE

DISCUSSION GROUP,
AFTER TWO WARNINGS.

OUR READING LIST

Our reading list is simply the Great Books of the Western World list with many of the mathematical and scientific texts excluded and the addition of Mortimer J. Adler's book.

Adler (1902-2001)

- How to Read A Book

Homer

- "The Iliad"
- "The Odyssey"

Aeschylus (523BC-456BC)

- "Prometheus Bound"
- "The Oresteia"
 - o "Agamemnon"
 - o "The Libation Bearers"
 - o "The Eumenides"

Sophocles (497BC -405BC)

- The Theban Plays
 - o "Oedipus the King"
 - o "Oedipus at Colonus"
 - o "Antigone"

Aristophanes (446BC- 386BC)

- "Clouds"

Plato (427BC-347BC)

- The Sophists
 - o "Protagoras"
 - o "Gorgias"

- o "Phaedrus"

- The Trial

- o "Meno"
- o "Euthyphro"
- o "The Apology"
- o "Crito"

- The Soul

- o "The Symposium"
- o "Phaedo"
- o "The Republic"

- Dialectic

- o "Theaetetus"
- o "Sophist"
- o "Statesman"

- Kosmos

- o "Timaeus"

Herodotus (484BC-425BC)

- "The History"
 - o Book i-ii
 - o Book vii-ix

Thucydides (460BC-400BC)

- "The History of the Peloponnesian War"

Aristotle (384BC-322BC)

- “Politics”
- “Ethics”
- “Metaphysics”
- “Categories”
- “De Interpretatione”
- “Prior Analytics”
- “Posterior Analytics”
- “Topics”
- “de Anima”
- “Rhetoric”
- “Poetics”
- “Ideas”

Plutarch (46-120)

- “The Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romans”
 - Lycurgus
 - Numa Pompilius
- Lycurgus and Numa Compared
- Solon
- Alexander
- Caesar
- Cato the Younger

Marcus Aurelius (121-180)

- “Meditations”

Lucretius (99-55)

- “On The Nature of Things”

Julius Caesar (100-44)

- “The Gallic War”

Virgil (70BC-19BC)

- “Aeneid”

Epictetus (50-135)

- “The Enchiridion”

Tacitus (56-120)

- “The Annals”
- “The Histories”

Livy (59BC-17AD)

- “The Early History of Rome”
- “The War with Hannibal”

Plotinus (204/5-270)

- “Enneads”

Saint Augustine of Hippo (354-430)

- “City of God”
- “Confessions”

Boethius (480-524)

- “The Consolation of Philosophy”

Saint Thomas Aquinas (1274-1323)

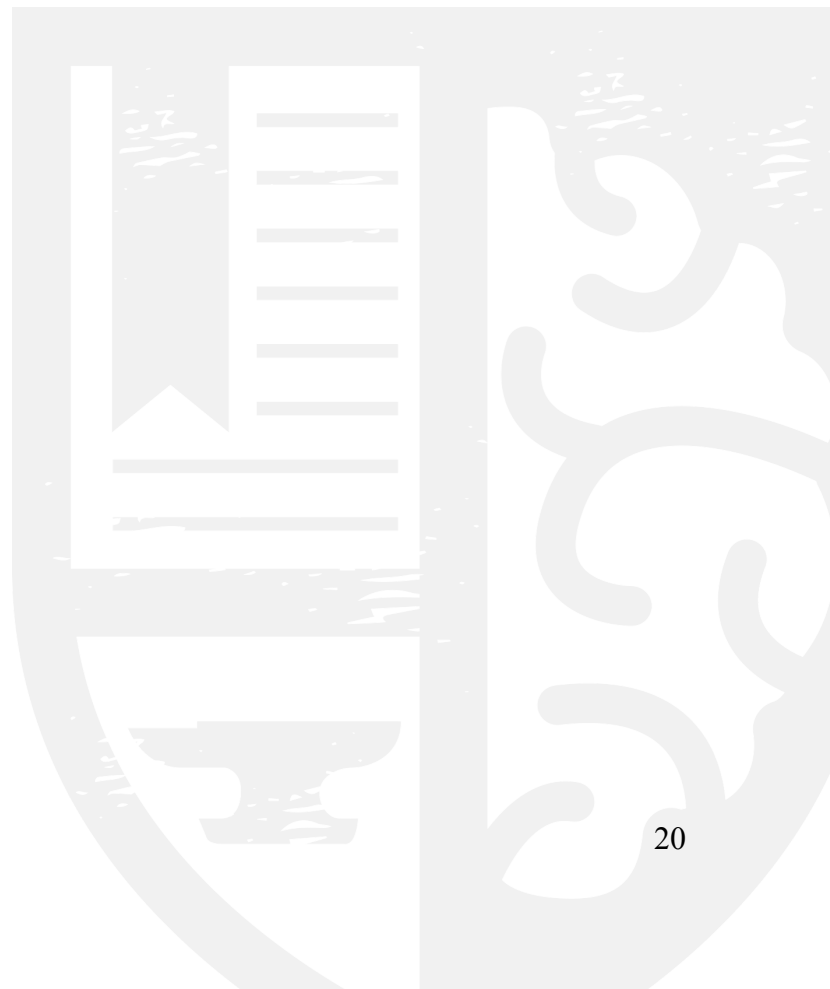
- “Treatise on God”
- “Treatise on the Trinity”

- “Treatise on the Creation”
- “Treatise on the Angels”
- “Treatise of the Work of the Six Days”
- “Treatise on Man”
- “Treatise on the Divine Government”
- “Treatise on the Last End”
- “Treatise on Human Acts”
- “Treatise on Habits”
- “Treatise on Law”
- “Treatise on Grace”
- “Treatise on Faith, Hope and Charity”
- “Treatise on Active and Contemplative”
- “Treatise on the States of Life”
- “Treatise on the Incarnation”
- “Treatise on the Sacraments”
- “Treatise on the Resurrection”
- “Treatise on the Last Things”

Dante Alighieri (1265-1321)

- “The Divine Comedy”
 - “Inferno”
 - “Purgatorio”
 - “Paradiso”

This concludes the texts covered in the OGB@home package.



If, after completing OGB@home your group wants to continue, I recommend the following.

Geoffrey Chaucer (1343-1400)

- “Canterbury Tales”
- “Troilus and Criseyde”

Niccolo Machiavelli (1469-1527)

- “The Prince”

Thomas Hobbe (1588-1679)

- “Leviathan”

Desiderius Erasmus (1466-1536)

- “Praise of Folly”

Selections from Martin Luther (1483-1546)

Francois Rabelais (1483—1553)

- Gargantua and Pantagruel

Michel Eyquem De Montaigne (1533-1592)

- “Essays”

Sir Francis Bacon (1561-1626)

- “Advancement of Learning”
- “Novum Organum”

- “New Atlantis”

William Shakespeare (1564-1616)

- “The First Part of King Henry the Sixth”
- “The Second Part of King Henry the Sixth”
- “The Third Part of King Henry the Sixth”
- “The Tragedy of King Richard the Third”
- “The Comedy of Errors”
- “Titus Andronicus”
- ‘The Taming on the Shrew”
- “The Two Gentlemen of Verona”
- “Love’s Labour’s Lost”
- “Romeo and Juliet”
- “The Tragedy of King Richard the Second”
- “A Midsummer-Night’s Dream”
- “The Life and Death of King John”
- “The Merchant of Venice”
- ‘The First Part of King Henry the Fourth”
- “The Second Part of King Henry the Fourth”
- “Much Ado About Nothing”
- “The Life of King Henry the Fifth”
- “Julius Caesar”
- “As You Like It”
- “Twelfth Night; or, What You Will”

- “Hamlet, Prince of Denmark”
- “The Merry Wives of Windsor”
- “Troilus and Cressida”
- “All’s Well that Ends Well”
- “Measure for Measure”
- “Othello, the Moor of Venice”
- “King Lear”
- “Macbeth”
- “Antony and Cleopatra”
- “Coriolanus”
- “Timon of Athens”
- “Pericles, Prince of Tyre”
- “Cymbeline”
- “The Winter’s Tale”
- “The Tempest”
- “The Famous History of the Life of King Henry the Eighth”
- “Sonnets”

William Gilbert (1544-1603)

- “On the Loadstone and Magnetic Bodies”

Galileo Galilei (1564-1642)

- “Concerning the Two New Sciences”

William Harvey (1578-1657)

- “On the Motion of the Heart and Blood in Animals”
- “On the Circulation of the Blood”
- “On the Generation of Animals”

Miguel de Cervantes (1547-1616)

- “The History of Don Quixote de la Mancha”

Rene Descartes (1596 – 1650)

- “Rules for the Direction of the Mind”
- “Discourse on the Method of Rightly Conducting the Reason”
- “Meditations on First Philosophy”
- “Objections Against the Meditations, and Replies”
- “The Geometry”

Baruch Spinoza (1632 – 1677)

- “Ethics”

John Milton (1608 – 1674)

- “English Minor Poems”
- “Paradise Lost”
- “Samson Agonistes”
- “Areopagitica”

Blaise Pascal (1623-1662)

- “The Provincial Letters”
- “Pensees”
- “Scientific Treatises”

Moliere (1622-1673)

- “The School for Wives”

- “The Critique of the School for Wives”
- “Tartuff”
- “Don Juan”
- “The Miser”
- “The Would-Be Gentleman”
- ‘The Would-Be Invalid”
- Jean Racine (1639-1699)
- “Berenice”
- “Phaedra”

Isaac Newton (1642 – 1727)

- “Mathematical Principles of Natural Philosophy”
- “Optics”

Christiaan Huygens (1629 – 1695)

- “Treatise on Light”

John Locke (1632 – 1704)

- “A Letter Concerning Toleration Concerning Civil Government, Second Essay”
- “An Essay Concerning Human Understanding”

George Berkeley (1685 – 1763)

- “The Principles of Human Knowledge”

David Hume (1711 – 1776)

- “An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding”

Jonathan Swift (1667 – 1745)

- “Gulliver’s Travels”

Francois-Marie Voltaire (1694 – 1778)

- “Candide”

Denis Diderot (1713 – 1784)

- “Rameau’s Nephew”

Charles-Louis de Secondat de La Brede et de Montesquieu (1689 – 1755)

- “The Spirit of Laws”

Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712 – 1778)

- “On the Origin of Inequality”
- “On Political Economy”
- “The Social Contract”

Adam Smith (1723 – 1790)

- “A Theory of Moral Sentiments”
- “An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations”

Edward Gibbon (1737 – 1794)

- “The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire”

Immanuel Kant (1724 – 1804)

- “The Critique of Pure Reason”
- “The Critique of Practical Reason”
- “The Critique of Judgment”

American State Papers

- “The Declaration of Independence”
- “Articles of Confederation”
- “The Constitution of the United States of America”
- Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, John Jay “The Federalist”
- “The Anti-Federalist Papers”

John Stuart Mill (1806-1873)

- “On Liberty”
- “Representative Government”
- “Utilitarianism”

James Boswell (1740-1795)

- “The Life of Samuel Johnson, LLD”

Antoine Laurent Lavoisier (1743-1794)

- “Elements in Chemistry”

Michael Faraday (1791-1867)

- “Experimental Researches in Electricity”
- “The Chemical History of the Candle.”

Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770-1831)

- “The Philosophy of Right”
- “The Philosophy of History”

Arthur Schopenhauer (1788 – 1860)

- “The World as Will and Representation”

Soren Kierkegaard (1813-1855)

- “Fear and Trembling”

Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900)

- “Beyond Good and Evil
- “On The Genealogy of Morality”

Alexis De Tocqueville (1805-1859)

- “Democracy in America”

Johann Wolfgang Von Goethe (1749-1832)

- “Faust”

Honore De Balzac (1799-1850)

- “Cousin Bette”

Jane Austen (1775-1817)

- “Pride and Prejudice”
- “Emma”

George Eliot (1819-1880)

- “Middlemarch”

Herman Melville (1819-1891)

- “Moby Dick”

Mark Twain (1835-1910)

- “Adventures of Huckleberry Finn”

Charles Darwin (1809-1882)

- “The Origin of Species By Means of Natural Selection”
- “The Descent of Man and Selection in Relation to Sex”

Karl Marx (1818-1883)

- “Capital”

Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels (1820-1895)

- “Manifesto of the Communist Party”

Count Leo Tolstoy (1828-1910)

- “War and Peace”

Fyodor Mikhailovich Dostoevsky (1821-1881)

- “The Brother Karamazov”
-

William James (1842-1910)

- “The Principles of Psychology”
- “Pragmatism”

Sigmund Freud

- “The Origin and Development of Psycho-Analysis
- “Selected Papers on Hysteria (Chapters 1-10)
- “The Sexual Enlightenment of Children
- “The Future Prospects of Psycho-Analytic Therapy
- “Observations on “Wild” Psycho-Analysis”
- “The Interpretations of Dreams”
- “On Narcissism”
- “Instincts and Their Vicissitudes”
- “Repression”

Sigmund Freud, cont.

- “The Unconscious”
- “A General Introduction to Psycho-Analysis”
- “Beyond the Pleasure Principle”
- “Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego”
- “The Ego and the Id”
- “Inhibitions, Symptoms, and Anxiety”
- “Thoughts for the Times on War and Death”

- “Civilization and Its Discontents”

Henri Bergson (1859-1941)

- “Introduction to Metaphysics”

John Dewey (1859-1952)

- “Experience and Education”

Alfred North Whitehead (1861-1947)

- “Science and the Modern World”
- “Introduction to Mathematics”

Martin Heidegger (1889-1976)

- “What is Metaphysics?”

Ludwig Wittgenstein (1889-1951)

- “Philosophical Investigations”

Max Planck (1858-1947)

- “Scientific Autobiography”

Albert Einstein (1879-1955)

- “Relativity: The Special and the General Theory”

Sir Arthur Eddington (1882-1944)

- “The Expanding Universe”

Niels Bohr (1885-1962)

- “Atomic Theory: The Descriptions of Nature”

- “(selections) Discussion with Einstein on Epistemological Problems in Atomic Physics”

G.H. Hardy (1887-1947)

- “A Mathematician’s Apology”

Werner Heisenberg (1901-1976)

- “Physics and Philosophy”

Erwin Schrodinger (1887-1961)

- “What Is Life?”

Theodosius Dobzhansky (1900-1975)

- “Genetics and the Origin of Species”

C.H. Waddington (1905-1975)

- “The Nature of Life”

Thorstein Veblen (1857-1929)

- “The Theory of the Leisure Class”

R.H. Tawney (1880-1962)

- “The Acquisitive Society”

John Maynard Keynes (1883-1946)

- “General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money”

Sir James George Frazer (1854-1941)

- “Selections from the Golden Bough: chapters I-IV, LXVI-LXIX”

Max Weber (1864-1920)

- “Selections from Essays in Sociology”
 - o Part I: Science and Politics
 - o Part II: Power
 - o Part III: Religion

Johan Huizinga (1872-1945)

- “The Waning of the Middle Ages”

Claude Levi-Strauss (1908-2009)

- “Selections from Structural Anthropology: Chapters I-VI, IX-XII, XV, XVII”

Henry James (1843-1916)

- “The Beast in the Jungle”

Bernard Shaw (1856-1950)

- “Saint Joan”

Joseph Conrad (1857-1924)

- “Heart of Darkness”

Anton Chekhov (1860-1904)

- “Uncle Vanya”

Marcel Proust (1871-1922)

- “Swann in Love from Remembrance of Things Past”

Franz Kafka (1883-1924)

- “The Metamorphosis”

D.H. Lawrence (1885-1930)

- “The Prussian Officer”

T.S. Eliot (1888-1965)

- “The Waste Land”

Eugene O’Neill (1888-1953)

- Mourning Becomes Electra

William Faulkner (1897-1962)

- “A Rose for Emily”

Bertolt Brecht (1898-1956)

- “Mother Courage and Her Children”

Ernest Hemingway (1899-1961)

- “The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber”

Where is the Bible in this list?

One of our founding principles has been that we don't discuss living political figures or current politics. Those topics are too new, too fresh, and too hot. We don't avoid the big ideas though. The subject matter we discuss and debate frequently involves important and sensitive issues we all care about deeply. However, we find that when we discuss these topics in terms of an ancient text that is new to us we are able to have dispassionate and thoughtful discourse about the big issues which divide us.

It has been suggested by many that the Christian Holy Bible should be included as a book for discussion, if not as a specific text, then as a secondary source. While we agree that The Bible is a "Great Book" it is not a part of the canon as originally conceived by Mortimer Adler.

Additionally, we do not believe it is possible to study the Bible as "literature" in a group composed of people who will undoubtedly have strongly held views on its content, translation, meaning, et cetera.

Merely finding a translation that readers could agree upon was an enormous challenge. No other text illicit such ire when ONLY DISCUSSING THE TRANSLATION!

The Bible isn't like the other texts we read. Most of us come to the Bible with deeply held beliefs about what is contained therein. The kind of questioning and discourse we pursue here

will tread on those beliefs. I live with constant dread of doing harm with this program. I know that discussing The Bible will harm some of our readers.

Many of the books which are included in the canon, such as those of Augustine, Aquinas, and others will obviously refer to The Bible. When this occurs, we will be discussing the authors' view of The Bible, not our own.

We've carefully considered all of the pros and cons. After doing so, we do not include the Christian Holy Bible in our program. We do encourage everyone to read The Bible on their own, in their church, or some other setting. The good news is that it is probably easier to find a discussion of this book than of any other.

THANKS

Thank you, Brett McKay. Brett is founder of www.artofmanliness.com and www.strenuouslife.co. I'm sure many of you are members of both OGB and The Strenuous Life. You'll recognize that I've borrowed a lot from Brett. He's been a mentor and inspiration to me in forming this project. He and I were barbell training one morning at my home and he told me I should create the OGB service. I protested that I didn't need another job, but Brett knew better and told me that I did. He was right. Thank you for the encouragement. Thanks for blazing the way. Thanks for sharing your knowledge and experience. Thanks for doing what you do for the world. Thank you, Brett.

Thank you, Matt Reynolds. Matt is founder of www.barbell-logic.com. Matt is my boss. I coach for him. He's also one of my best friends. Matt told me the same thing Brett did. He said, "Hambrick, guys like you need lots of jobs to feel alive." He's right. I also borrowed and stole liberally from the work Matt has done in creating BBL. He has created the finest online concierge service of any kind, ever. Hopefully I've learned enough from him to make this as great a service for my clients as BBL is for his. Matt has been a constant supporter of this project from before day one. Matt leaves people stronger, and the cosmic woodpile taller, every day. Thank you, Matt.

Thank you, Jim Furr. Jim is the co-founder of the Tulsa group that meets in my home. Jim has encouraged me and supported me at every step of the way from setting up our first meeting in my home, to proofreading all of the website and every other piece of content at OGB, to arguing out every detail of how OGB should work in order to best help the members. You will likely run into Jim here at OGB. You'll love him too. He's a fervent reader and advocate for the Great Books program. I call him Saint James the Evangelist. He leads groups here from time to time, does podcasts with me, and has drunk many a pour of whiskey with me. He's a fantastic ally. He's a great friend. He's a gentleman and a scholar. He's who I want to be like when I grow up. Thank you, Jim.

Thank you, Karl Schudt. I met Karl at the 2016 Starting Strength Coaches Association Conference and knew immediately that I wanted to work with him. He's kinder and smarter than he is strong (he's crazy, crazy strong), and dedicated to helping more people get stronger both mentally and physically. Karl wrote our Seminar Guidelines and Standards of Conduct,

tons of Seminar Host training materials and more. I couldn't do this without his calm, cool presence. Karl is a fantastic father and Seminar Host. I think he'd be surprised to know he's a damned good midwife to internet Great Books programs too. Thank you, Karl.

Thank you to The Tulsa Group. The folks who have read the THOUSANDS of pages of text that we have covered and devotedly worked through this program with me have shown me this works. I absolutely would not have proceeded with OGB if the Tulsa Group wasn't so amazing. Clay Atwood, Thad Hensley, Dallas Shell, Aren Johnstone, Jim Furr, Steve Lusk, and Brett McKay show up on the third Thursday and are intellectually vulnerable and ready to work. Every. Time. Others have cycled through our group and I thank them as well. Thanks to those who joined us for a while, we benefited, and I hope you did too. Over time these men in the Tulsa Group have become a very important part of my social life.

I care about and for them, have had very difficult conversations with them, and have grown alongside them. You gentlemen are mighty important to me. Thank you all.

Thank you Charity Hambrick. Charity is my wife. She lets all of those folks come into our home and raise a ruckus on the third Thursday and never grumps or complains about it. She has spent countless thousands of hours as a widow to my businesses and books. I think she secretly loves it. She's in it with me, the books, child rearing, strength training, business, everything. She's my real life partner. Not just a partner for life, but in life as well. I love you Charity. Thank you.