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NOTED AUTHOR DAVE EGGERS COMING TO MEMPHIS TO DISCUSS 'MEMPHIS READS' FEATURED BOOK

Visit the [Memphis Reads website](#) for details!

MEMPHIS, TN – Upon every face, there is an expression. Behind every face, there lies a story. In his book *What is the What*, author Dave Eggers introduces Valentino Achak Deng and shares the impactful true story behind the face of this Sudanese “lost boy”.

Separated from his family during the Second Sudanese Civil War, Deng led a nomadic lifestyle as he fled one place to another seeking refuge while losing family and friends along the way. Terror-stricken and running for his life, Deng’s story of hardships is the **Memphis Reads** featured book for 2015.

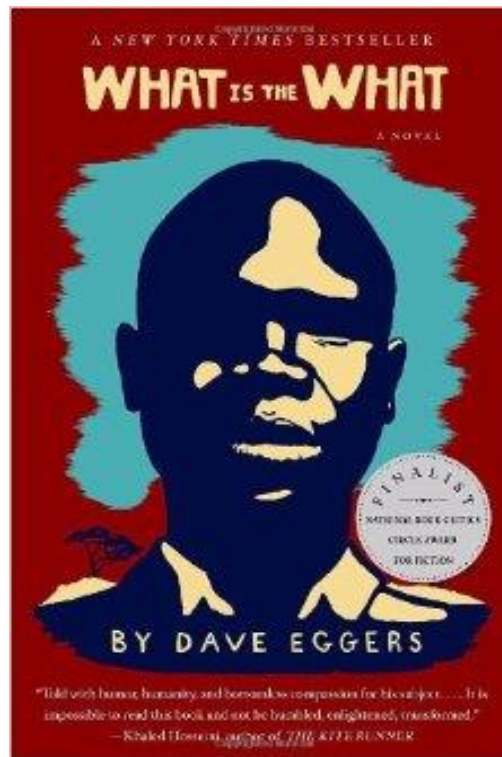
City of Memphis residents are invited to read *What is the What* and to participate in the following Memphis Reads events, which are free and open to the public.

Film screening of *The Good Lie* and Question & Answer Session with Stacey Hydrick and Lost Boy Joseph Atem – 5:30 pm, Thursday, October 29, 2015 at Benjamin L. Hooks Central Library (3030 Poplar Avenue)

Valentino Achak Deng in Conversation with Rhodes Readers – 6 pm, Wednesday, November 4, 2015 at Rhodes College McCallum Ballroom (2000 North Parkway)

Book Talk and Signing with Author Dave Eggers and Valentino Achak Deng – 7 pm, Friday, November 5, 2015 at Creative Arts Building (2375 Tiger Lane South)

The City’s largest book club, Memphis Reads is an opportunity for Memphians of all ages to connect through the shared experience of reading one book and gathering to discuss it. The purpose is to promote literacy, encouraging citizens to focus on their similarities while celebrating their differences.



“By reading one book, Memphians can find a common ground despite their class, race, educational, or economic differences,” explained Dr. Karen B. Golightly, Christian Brothers University Associate Professor and program organizer. “The goal of Memphis Reads is to build community one book at a time,” she said.

Memphis Public Library’s Adult Services Coordinator Wang-Ying Glasgow added, “When you read a book and the story resonates with you, it becomes more meaningful when you meet the author. During Memphis Reads, the whole community will come together to bond and share common interests and reading experiences – all in the name of ‘literacy’ – which is key to our collective success.”

“Memphis Reads and Memphis Public Libraries share the common goals of helping our citizens to connect, learn, and grow,” Director of Library Keenon McCloy commented. “We look forward to welcoming author Dave Eggers to Memphis. His work and his insight are sure to excite readers citywide and to draw a crowd. This program is an opportunity and an investment in our community and the citizens who comprise it.”

Memphis Reads is made possible by partnerships between several local agencies, which include Christian Brothers University and their Fresh Reads program, the Memphis Public Library & Information Center, Friends of the Library, City of Memphis, Parks & Neighborhoods Division, Rhodes College, University of Memphis, Shelby County Schools, Facing History and Ourselves, Booksellers at Laurelwood, and Southwest Tennessee Community College. Other sponsoring agencies that are participating are International Paper, Nolan, Tennessee Arts Commission, South Arts, NEA, and Iris, Etc. Catering Services.

For more program information, visit the official [Memphis Reads website](#), [Facebook page](#), or search Twitter for [#MemphisReads](#). This project is funded under a Grant Contract with the State of Tennessee. This event is funded, in part, by a grant from South Arts in partnership with the National Endowment for the Arts and the Tennessee Arts Commission.

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ABOUT THE MEMPHIS PUBLIC LIBRARY & INFORMATION CENTER:

The Memphis Public Library & Information Center (MPLIC) is committed to satisfying the customer's need to know. With 18 Library locations throughout the Greater Memphis area, MPLIC offers an array of programs, services, and resources for citizens and visitors to enjoy. They include JobLINC mobile career services, LINC/2-1-1 telephone referral services, a TV and radio station (WYPL TV-18, WYPL FM 89.3), a small business center, laptops for checkout and free Wi-Fi access, in addition to books, e-books, DVDs, records, compact discs, and educational programs for children, teens, and adults. Customers can find age-appropriate services and a list of Library locations at www.memphislibrary.org.

Memphis Public Libraries are publicly and privately funded. Approximately three million people visit the Memphis Public Library & Information Center each year.

ABOUT THE CITY OF MEMPHIS:

Under the leadership of Mayor A C Wharton, Jr. since 2009, Memphis is becoming a City of Choice by focusing on creating safe and vibrant neighborhoods, investing in young people, creating economic opportunities for all, and delivering excellence in government. Memphis is famous around the world for the convergence of creativity and innovation that have produced its most famous exports, such as legendary music, the company that invented modern world commerce FedEx, and the international leader in curing catastrophic childhood illnesses St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. It has a celebrated entrepreneurial history, more Fortune 500 companies than any other Tennessee city, and it has been named one of the best cities in the U.S. for startups. It is famous as home for Elvis Presley's Graceland, Sun Studios, Stax Museum of American Soul Music, Beale Street, the National Civil Rights Museum, and the most unspoiled riverfront on the Mississippi River. The City of Memphis, which employs more than 6,000 people with an annual budget of approximately \$650 million, has developed and led programs that have dramatically reduced crime, increased jobs, improved Memphis' quality of life, and attracted national attention and investments in the City. For more information, visit www.memphistn.gov.