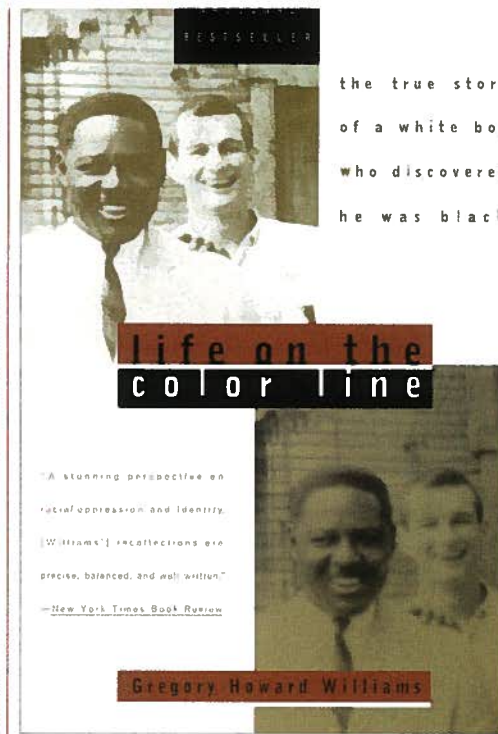


Discussion Guide

1. *Life on the Color Line* is a memoir based on the author's life, but did you notice ways he has shaped the story of his life? For example, what things do you think he emphasizes about his life and what does he leave out?
2. What does the book suggest makes a person "black" or "white"? Are these categories scientific, historical, social, or some combination of these? What difference do those categories make in Williams' life? Does race still matter today in Indiana? If so, how? How do you handle racism when you witness it?
3. What were the main obstacles that Williams faced as a child? Do some of these problems exist now in Indiana? For example, displacement, poverty, poor housing, parental neglect, alcoholism, racial hostility? Are there ways we can help alleviate these problems either as individuals or by working together to solve complex problems?
4. How did Williams deal with these obstacles? What did he do himself and what advice or help did he get from others?
5. What do you remember about Williams' experiences in school? How do you think most students' performance and self-esteem would be affected by low academic expectations, neglect, and hostility? How do our school systems work now for poor children and children of color? How did Williams do as well as he did?
6. What role do athletics play in the book? What role do athletics play in Evansville? What role does race play in athletics? Do you think the game between Reitz and Muncie would be the same today?
7. Does the book have simple heroes, villains, or victims, or are the people more complicated than that? Which people in the book seemed most interesting to you and why? For example, how does Williams portray the differences between himself and his brother?
8. How did the book affect the way you think about something in your life, your education, or your community?



**ONE
BOOK
ONE
COMMUNITY**



FIND OUT WHAT HAPPENS WHEN ALL OF SOUTHWESTERN INDIANA READS

life on the color line

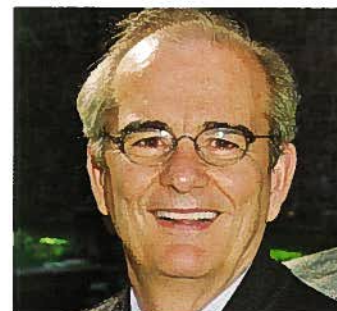
by Gregory Howard Williams

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 1, 2009 • 7 P.M. • BOSSE HIGH SCHOOL



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READING AND GROWING
TOGETHER IN
SOUTHWESTERN INDIANA

JOIN US!

Gregory Howard Williams will come to Evansville to discuss his book, *Life on the Color Line*, answer questions and sign books.

Thursday, October 1, 2009 • 7 p.m.
Bosse High School Auditorium
Admission is free and open to the public.

About the Program

One Book/One Community is a grassroots program to develop a community built around the shared experience of people reading and talking about the same book. Bringing people together to discuss ideas in books can play an important role in breaking down barriers between people, cultures, and economic and educational backgrounds.

The Evansville Vanderburgh Public Library is joining with the Evansville media, local schools and universities, book stores, and businesses to promote a culture of reading in the Evansville community.

What Can You Do After You've Read the Book?

- Visit our website www.evpl.org/onebook.
- Share the book with others.
- Listen for an interview on WNIN 88.3 FM.
- Join a book discussion group.
- Use "Suggested Questions for Discussion" in the back of this brochure.
- Attend the 10th Annual Diversity and Family Friendly Conference October 1. For more information please visit ehradiversity.com

How Can You Participate?

Participating Libraries & Book Discussion Dates:

Central 200 SE MLK Jr. Blvd
428-8241 Sept. 3 – Noon

McCollough 5115 Washington Ave.
428-8236 Sep. 22 – 3 p.m.

North Park 960 Koehler Dr.
428-8237 Sept. 1 – 6:30 p.m.

Oaklyn 3001 Oaklyn Dr.
428-8234 Sept. 14 – 6:30 p.m.

Red Bank 120 S. Red Bank Rd.
428-8205 Sept. 9 – noon

Stringtown 2100 Stringtown Rd.
428-8233 Sept. 21 – 3:30 p.m.

West 2000 W. Franklin St.
428-8232 Sept. 24 – 3:30 p.m.

Round Table Discussion with Community Leaders

August 25 • Barnes & Noble • 7 p.m.
Free admission • Open to the public
Hear community leaders take on the book and participate with them in a question and answer session.

Check other area libraries & book stores for dates. Participation is free and open to the public.

About the Book

In this extraordinary and powerful memoir, Gregory Howard Williams recounts his remarkable journey along the color line and illuminates the contrasts between the black and white worlds: one of privilege, opportunity, and comfort; the other of deprivation, repression, and struggle.

He tells the story of his father, a self-destructive man who often neglected his children, yet had faith in his eldest son's ability to succeed in the face of nearly insurmountable obstacles. Of "Miss Dora," a loving family friend who gave Gregory and his brother the food they ate, the clothes on their backs, and the roof over their heads - all on a salary of just twenty-five dollars per week. Of the hostility and prejudice he encountered all too often, from both blacks and whites, and the surprising moments of encouragement and acceptance he found from each.

Williams tells the story, too, of the divergent paths he and his brother eventually took, one defying the odds and the advice of teachers and counselors to become a lawyer.

— Barnes & Noble

About the Author

Williams graduated from Ball State University. He paid for school by working as a deputy sheriff often for more than forty hours a week. Williams then attended George Washington University, earning both his J.D. and Ph.D. degrees.

In 1993, Williams became the Dean of Law and Carter C. Kissell Professor of Law at The Ohio State University and managed to shift the school effectively, increasing both fundraising and national rankings.

In 1995, Williams published *Life on the Color Line: The True Story of a White Boy Who Discovered He Was Black*, an autobiography. The *Los Angeles Times* selected it "Book of the Year," and Williams was soon featured on television and radio, including Dateline NBC, Larry King Live, The Oprah Winfrey Show, Nightline and National Public Radio. The following year, the Gustavus Myers Center for Human Rights in North America selected *Life on the Color Line* as an Outstanding Book on the Subject of Human Rights.

In 1998, Williams was invited by President Bill Clinton to join Clinton's "Call to Action" to promote law office diversity and pro bono work. The following year, Williams was chosen by the National Association of Public Interest Law as "Dean of the Year," and he was awarded the National Bar Association's A. Leon Higginbotham, Jr. Award for Contributions to the Preservation of Human and Civil Rights. In 2001, Williams became The City College of New York's eleventh president. Williams serves as Chair of the Commission on Access, Diversity and Excellence (CADE) of the National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges.

One Book/One Community Committee Members

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