



Since 2009 the goal of the Lariat Adult Fiction Reading List has been to highlight outstanding fiction that is simply “a pleasure to read.”

History: The Lariat Adult Fiction Reading List evolved as a Texas form of the American Library Association’s Notable Books Council and Reading List Council combined. In 2008, Corinne Hill, a 2004 Library Journal Mover and Shaker and 2014 Librarian of the Year, approached Texas Library Association Director, Pat Smith, with the idea of creating a fiction reading list that would celebrate the titles that leave the reader with a lasting impression of being “a pleasure to read.” Hill was further encouraged by former TLA President Melody Kelly who bestowed the name “Lariat.” To approach the Board with a formal plan, Hill enlisted the help of Denton Public Library North Branch Manager, Kimberly Wells, who fine-tuned the manual and developed the guidelines for selection. On December 6, 2008 The TLA Executive Board discussed Hill’s idea and appointed a 3-member task force to investigate the proposal which was submitted to the Board on June 2009. On April 3, 2009 the TLA Executive Board approved the creation of the Lariat Adult Reading List and the Lariat Task Force.

Since then, the selection of 25 outstanding fiction titles of the year has been carried out in a variety of ways, and under various auspices. For several years, the selection was prepared by a 12 member committee who met at Annual Assembly and voted at Annual Conference. Committee members come from various library sectors and are appointed by the incoming TLA President. In 2013, then Chair, Jessica Russell, of the Harris County Public Library, ushered in a new title selection process with a 9 member committee that would run a calendar year with voting concluded in December. The Lariat List is celebrated at Annual Conference. Starting in 2012, the Lariat List Adult Fiction Author Session Luncheon began a new tradition of inviting authors from past and current lists.

Notable Authors invited to speak at the luncheon include Reshonda Tate Billingsly, Tom Franklin, Gwendolyn Zepeda, Ernest Cline, Naomi Benaron, Joe Lansdale, David Morrell, Suzanne Rindell, M.O. Walsh and Katja Millay.

Notable committee members include Corinne Hill, Chair 2009-2010, Kimberly Wells, Chair 2010-2011, Dreanna Belden, Chair 2011-2012, Victoria Kemp, Chair 2012-2013, Jessica Russell, Chair 2013-2014, Kimberly Gay, Chair 2014-2015, Monica Bustillo, Chair 2015-2016, and Reka Reynolds, Chair 2016-2017.

(Summary by Monica Garza Bustillo, prepared January 2016)