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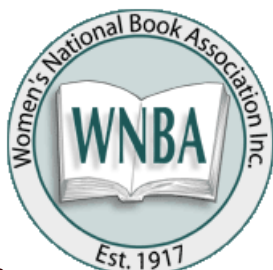


Wilda Williams

Breaking Gender Barriers

October 29, 2007

Today women play prominent roles in the publishing industry, but just 90 years ago they were banned from the all-male Booksellers League. In 1917, a group of female New York City booksellers



decided to establish a league of their own. Tonight at the New York Center for Independent Publishing, that organization, the **Women's National Book Association**, celebrates its 90th anniversary and the launch of **National Reading Group Month** with a **read-a-thon** featuring authors Laura Dave (*London is the Best City in America*), Wally Lamb (*She's Come Undone*), Matthew Sharpe (*Jamestown*), Beverly Swerling (*City of Dreams*), and Adriana Trigiani (*Big Stone Gap*). Congratulations, WNBA, and here's to another 90 years of supporting the (gender bias-free) community of the book.

Ironically, it looks like the WNBA has outlived its sexist predecessor; a scan of the **New York Times archives** tells me members spent a lot of time talking shop at "smokers". Perhaps the old fellows puffed themselves to death! A free advanced reading copy of Sue Grafton's *T is for Trespass* or Patricia Cornwell's *Book of the Dead* to the first librarian who can tell me what happened to the Booksellers League.

Posted by **Wilda Williams** on October 29, 2007 | [Comments \(0\)](#)

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