

READER'S GUIDE

ONE BOOK
ONE READ
2024 SELECTION



BY NIKKI ERLICK

THANK YOU

FOR JOINING THE 2024 ONE BOOK ONE READ PROGRAM

This year, we will feature *The Measure* by Nikki Erlick. The book is about eight people who receive a box containing a string that indicates their lifespan. It explores how the characters' lives and relationships change as a result of knowing the length of their lives or choosing not to know at all. The book also explores humanity's obsession with longevity and quality of life.

The goal of the One Book, One Read program is to get as many people across Fulton County reading, talking about, and engaging with the same book, as well as, promoting conversations, community building, and literacy all while having fun with your friends, family, and neighbors. The Library System, with support from the Atlanta-Fulton Public Library Foundation will host a special visit with author Nikki Erlick on Saturday, August 10 at the Central Library (stay tuned for more details). The author will discuss the book, answer audience questions and take part in a book signing, immediately following the talk. Look for a book club discussion coming to a library branch near you!



ABOUT NIKKI ERLICK

Nikki Erlick's debut novel, *The Measure*, was an instant New York Times Bestseller, with global translations forthcoming in 24 languages. *The Measure* was selected as Jenna Bush Hager and *The TODAY Show's* "Read With Jenna" Book Club pick, as well as the Barnes & Noble Discover Pick. Nikki previously worked as a travel writer, exploring nearly a dozen countries on assignment, and as a ghostwriter, writing for CEOs, entrepreneurs, and academics. She graduated Harvard University summa cum laude and earned her master's degree from Columbia University.

ABOUT THE MEASURE

Eight ordinary people. One extraordinary choice.

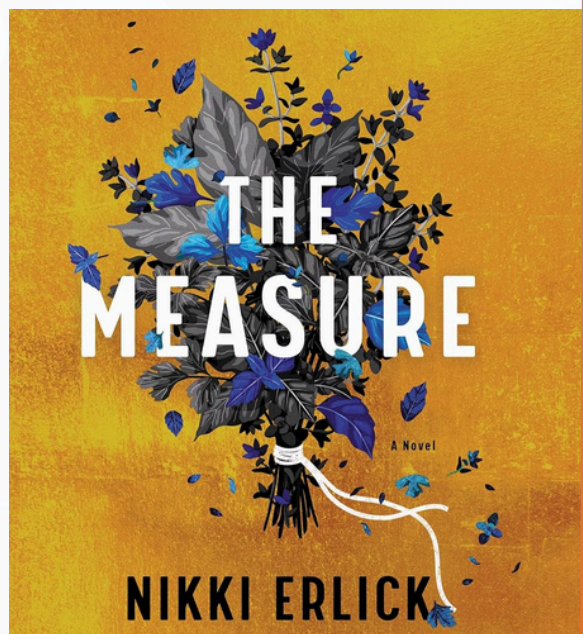
It seems like any other day. You wake up, pour a cup of coffee, and head out.

But today, when you open your front door, waiting for you is a small wooden box. This box holds your fate inside: the answer to the exact number of years you will live.

From suburban doorsteps to desert tents, every person on every continent receives the same box. In an instant, the world is thrust into a collective frenzy. Where did these boxes come from? What do they mean? Is there truth to what they promise?

As society comes together and pulls apart, everyone faces the same shocking choice: Do they wish to know how long they'll live? And, if so, what will they do with that knowledge?

The Measure charts the dawn of this new world through an unforgettable cast of characters whose decisions and fates interweave with one another: best friends whose dreams are forever entwined, pen pals finding refuge in the unknown, a couple who thought they didn't have to rush, a doctor who cannot save himself, and a politician whose box becomes the powder keg that ultimately changes everything.



HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

THE MEASURE
BY NIKKI ERLICK

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Keeping track of time

Whether you meet for an hour or two, discussions can get long and go over. Give each question a specific amount of time to provide open discussion and mingling at the end.

Keep the discussion going

Participants may begin sharing experiences that deviate from the topic; remember to respectfully rein people in.

Allow many voices

The key to a great discussion is participation and engagement. Don't be afraid to call on an individual who has not spoken during your discussion. They may just be shy.

Maintain the peace if discussions intensify

Everyone's voice and opinions matter during a discussion. The most important thing is that they are shared and received respectfully. The moderator facilitates this level of respect.

Share your experience on social media

We need you to spread the good word so others can be a part of this amazing initiative, bringing Fulton County residents together.



LIBRARY BOOK CLUBS

ADAMS PARK

July 27 - 1PM

2231 Campbellton Rd SW,
Atlanta, GA 30311

ADAMSVILLE-COLLIER HEIGHTS

July 13 - 3PM

3424 M.L.K. Jr Dr SW,
Atlanta, GA 30331

ALPHARETTA

June 26 - 2PM

July 24 - 2PM

10 Park Plaza,
Alpharetta, GA 30009

BUCKHEAD

July 24 - 2PM

10 Park Plaza,
Alpharetta, GA 30009

CENTRAL

July 30 - 7PM

One Margaret Mitchell Sq,
Atlanta 30303

COLLEGE PARK

July 20 - 11AM

3647 Main St,
College Park, GA 30337

DOGWOOD

July 30 - 4:30PM

1838 Donald Lee Hollowell Pkwy
NW, Atlanta, GA 30318

EAST ATLANTA

JUNE 25 - 4:30PM

400 Flat Shoals Ave SE,
Atlanta, GA 30316

EAST ROSWELL

July 30 - 2PM

2301 Holcomb Bridge Rd,
Roswell, GA 30076

EVELYN G. LOWERY @ CASCADE

JULY 16 - 5PM

JULY 23 - 5PM

3665 Cascade Rd,
Atlanta, GA 30331

FAIRBURN

JULY 9 - 5PM

60 Valley View Dr,
Fairburn, GA 30213

GLADYS S. DENNARD @ SOUTH FULTON

July 13 - 12PM

4055 Flat Shoals Rd,
South Fulton, GA 30291

HAPEVILLE

July 16 - 6:30PM

525 King Arnold St,
Hapeville, GA 30354

KIRKWOOD

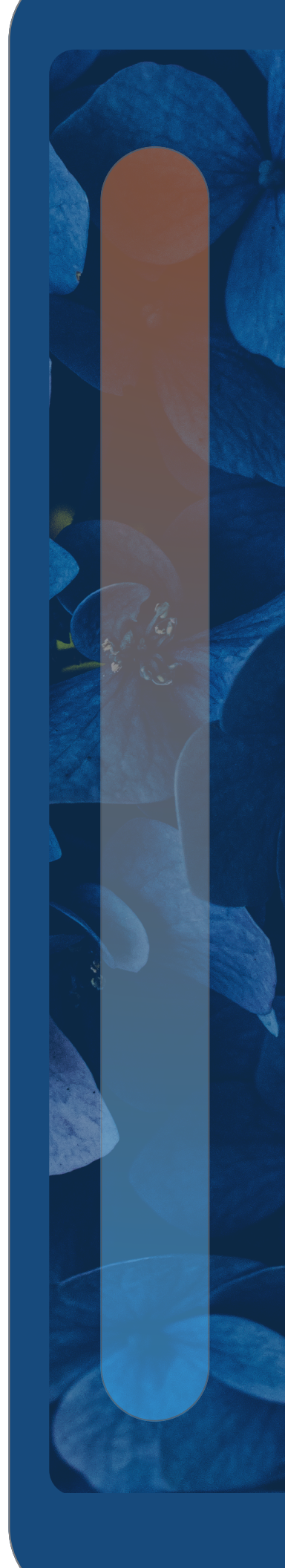
July 29 - 5:30PM

1 Kirkwood Rd NE,
Atlanta, GA 30317

LOUISE WATLEY @ SOUTHEAST

June 17 - 6:30PM

1463 Pryor Rd SW,
Atlanta, GA 30315



LIBRARY BOOK CLUBS

MECHANICSVILLE

July 17 - 10:30AM

400 Formwalt St SW,
Atlanta, GA 30312

MLK: OFFSITE CONDESA COFFEE

July 13 - 10AM

480 John Wesley Dobbs Ave
NE, Unit 100, Atlanta, GA
30312

METROPOLITAN

June 25 - 6PM

1332 Metropolitan Pkwy
SW, Atlanta, GA 30310

MILTON

July 24 - 12PM

855 Mayfield Rd,
Milton, GA 30009

NORTHEAST SPRUILL OAKS

July 29 - 5PM

9560 Spruill Rd,
Johns Creek, GA 30022

NORTHSIDE

July 15 - 6PM

3295 Northside Pkwy NW,
Atlanta, GA 30327

NORTHWEST @ SCOTT'S CROSSING

June 27 - 12PM

2489 Perry Blvd NW,
Atlanta, GA 30318

OCEE

**June 25 - 6:30PM
July 23 - 1PM**

5090 Abbotts Bridge Rd,
Johns Creek, GA 30005

PALMETTO

July 18 - 4PM

9111 Cascade Palmetto
Hwy, Palmetto, GA 30268

JOAN P. GARNER AT PONCE

July 23 - 5PM

980 Ponce De Leon Ave NE,
Atlanta, GA 30306

ROSWELL

July 15 - 6PM

115 Norcross St, Roswell,
GA 30075

SANDY SPRINGS

June 17 - 1PM

395 Mount Vernon Hwy NE,
Atlanta, GA 30328

WASHINGTON PARK

JULY 16 - 6:30PM

1116 M.L.K. Jr Dr SW,
Atlanta, GA 30314

WEST END

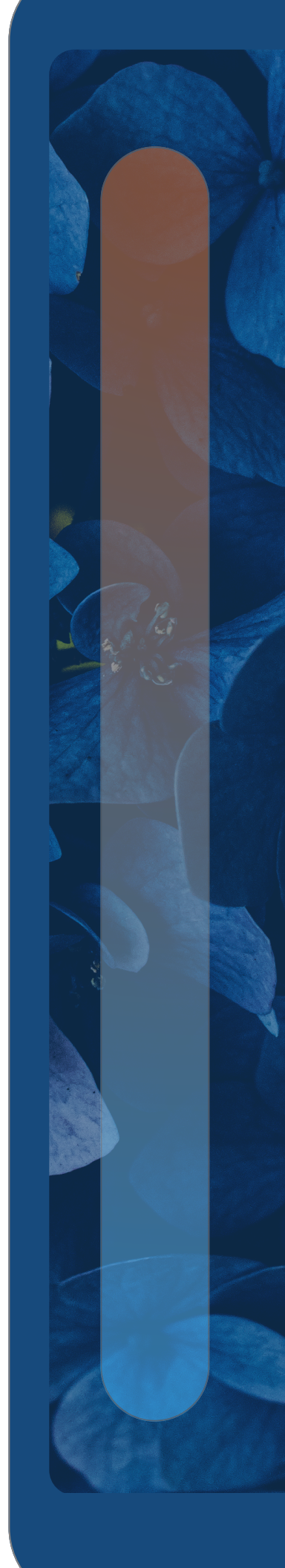
July 18 - 2PM

525 Peebles St SW,
Atlanta, GA 30310

WOLF CREEK

JULY 25 - 12PM

3100 Enon Rd,
Atlanta, GA 30331



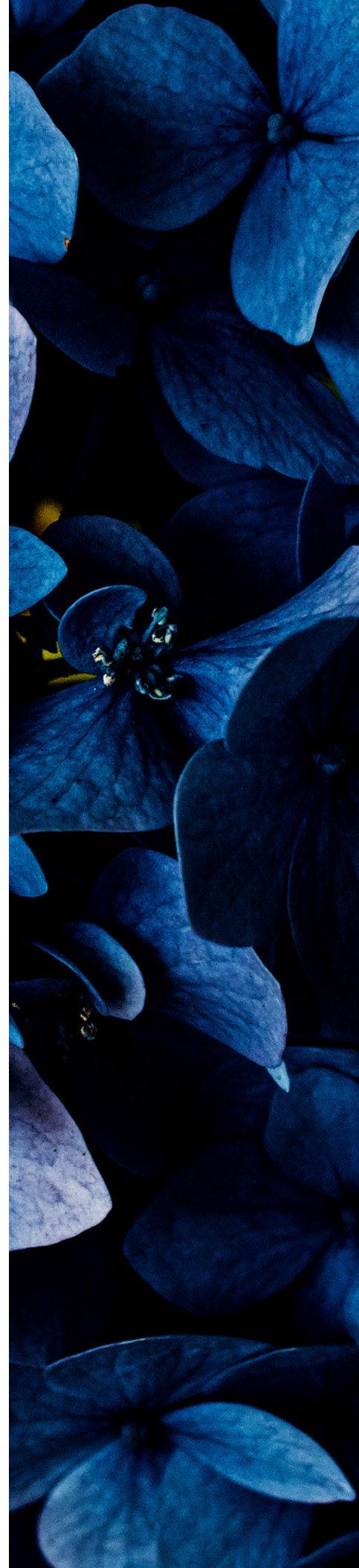


GUIDING QUESTIONS

- If the box from *The Measure* arrived on your doorstep, would you open it? Is there perhaps a particular age or moment in your life when you would be most inclined to view your string?
- Knowing the length of their string causes many characters to rethink their careers, their dreams, even their views on marriage and children. Some people quit their jobs and shutter their businesses; others travel to distant lands. How would knowing about your string — or not knowing about it — affect the way you lived your life?
- Do you think anyone else should be able to know the length of someone’s string? Ben initially feels conflicted over telling his parents, while Javier chooses to hide the truth from his. Do you think family members have a right to know about each other’s strings? What about members of the outside world, such as employers, doctors, or government officials? Should short-stringers be able to identify themselves in order to receive legal protections or government aid? Do you think political candidates should be able to use their strings during a campaign, as Anthony did?
- The world of *The Measure* feels familiar to our own, except for one powerful twist. What is the benefit of setting a novel in a slightly-altered version of our world? In what ways did this fictional society’s reaction to the strings mirror the behavior of our own society? In what ways did it differ?
- In the support group, Maura argues that, “We never should have allowed them to start labeling people as ‘long-stringers’ and ‘short-stringers.’” Do you agree with her? Are there both benefits and dangers to “labeling” a particular group or identity? Do you think it would create more division in society? Or could the shared experience of having a short string break down barriers between different groups of people?
- Nina worries that if Maura were to enter the hospital, she might face multiple biases as a Black woman and a short-stringer. Do you think that having a short string would be particularly detrimental to members of historically marginalized groups?
- In *The Measure*, various countries have different responses to the strings. How do you think countries outside of the United States might react? (Although this one might not work if these questions are being put in the UK version, as well.)

GUIDING QUESTIONS

- Do you think Jack was right to suggest switching strings with Javier, knowing he was selfishly motivated? Javier then feels guilty about lying to the army. Do you think his lie is justified?
- Do you think it was fair of Amie to express her concern about Nina’s marriage to Maura? If you have siblings, do you think they would have reacted the same way, or differently?
- Religion takes on varying degrees of importance in the characters’ lives. Javier is Catholic, Nihal is Hindu, and other characters aren’t observant. How do you think the arrival of the strings might impact a person’s religious devotion, or lack thereof? Would the reactions vary within different faiths?
- Ben’s former girlfriend Claire breaks up with him after learning about his short string, unable to commit to him with a “countdown clock” looming over them. Is her choice understandable? Is it forgivable?
- At the end of the book, Nina wonders if Amie would still have had children if she had known that both she and Ben were short-stringers. In the world of *The Measure*, do you think potential parents would feel an obligation to look at their strings before deciding to have children?
- Would you feel any guilt if you learned you were a long-stringer? Do you think long-stringers should owe anything to the world in return for their string? Do you think it’s possible for someone to deserve a short string?
- In the world of *The Measure*, people receive their boxes upon turning 22. Do you think that’s too young to be facing such a choice? Or should the choice be offered to people even younger?
- The strings provide one measurement of our lives: the number of years we will live. What are the other ways that we can “measure” a life? Which measurements would you apply to your own?
- Do you think the arrival of the strings would bring out the worst in people, or the best? Would you view the boxes as a gift or a curse?



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

WHO CAN BE INVOLVED?

Everyone! We are looking for community members, thought leaders, and curious readers to engage in reading the book with your friends and community. Gather a group from your family, religious organization, civic group, sorority or fraternity, job, or friends to read and discuss the book together.

DOES ONE BOOK ONE READ COST?

The Author event on August 10 is free and open to the public! Register for the event at fulcolibrary.org/obor

WHERE CAN I GET THE BOOK?

There are approximately 500 copies in circulation in the Fulton County Library System. Local retailers, such as ACapella Books, are committed to having copies of the book in stock.

WHAT IS THE TIMELINE FOR THIS EVENT? WHEN DO I NEED TO SIGN UP?

There is no deadline to sign up.

- May - August 2024 - Read! Book clubs will meet every month.
- August 10, 2024 lecture from 11am-2pm, Central Library





GRAB YOUR SEAT TODAY!

GUEST MODERATOR



Monica Kaufman Pearson

EXPERIENCE THE MEASURE

WITH FULCOLIBRARY

AUGUST 10, 2024

11:00 AM - 2:00 PM // Central Library

One Margaret Mitchell Square, Atlanta, GA 30303

Join us for a lively chat with "The Measure" author Nikki Erlick and moderator Monica Kaufman Pearson, followed by a book signing.

Free to the Public

RSVP at fulcolibrary.org/obor



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atlanta-fulton public library foundation