



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

## San Diego Public Library

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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### **SAN DIEGO PUBLIC LIBRARY HOSTS A BOOK DISCUSSION OF “ACHILLES IN VIETNAM: COMBAT TRAUMA AND THE UNDOING OF CHARACTER”**

*A Continuation of the Exciting “Page and Stage” Series*

**SAN DIEGO** – The San Diego Public Library continues its presentation of the *Page and Stage: The Power of the Iliad Today* series with a book discussion. San Diego Public Library is one of only 16 libraries nationwide to receive a grant to host this series. The discussion: *Achilles in Vietnam: Combat Trauma and the Undoing of Character*, by Jonathan Shay, will take place at 6:30 p.m. on Monday, June 22 at 6:30 pm in the Wangenheim Room on the third floor of the Central Library, located at 820 E Street in downtown San Diego.

In this strikingly original and groundbreaking book, Dr. Shay examines the psychological devastation of war by comparing the soldiers of Homer's "Iliad" with Vietnam veterans suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder. Although the "Iliad" was written twenty-seven centuries ago, it has much to teach about combat trauma, as do the more recent, compelling voices and experiences of Vietnam vets. *The New York Times* says of the book and author, “*Achilles in Vietnam: Combat Trauma and the Undoing of Character*, A transcendent literary adventure. His compassionate book deserves a place in the lasting literature of the Vietnam War.”

Jonathan Shay, M.D., Ph.D., was the visiting scholar-at-large at the U.S. Naval War College in 2001 and is currently a staff psychiatrist in the Department of Veterans Affairs Outpatient Clinic in Boston. His patients are Vietnam combat veterans with severe, chronic posttraumatic stress disorder. Dr. Shay speaks frequently at the invitation of U.S. military services, universities, and colleges.

Classics scholar Eliot Wirshbo, Ph.D., a member of the Literature faculty at the University of California San Diego, will facilitate the discussion.

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City of San Diego Public Library cardholders who would like to take advantage of this unique opportunity to read and discuss a work with a scholar and need a copy of the book may pick one up in the History Section of the Central Library, or go online to place a hold on the title with their library account and PIN to have it sent to a San Diego Public Library branch.

*Page and Stage: The Power of the Iliad Today* is a ground breaking in-depth partnership between the library and the theatre sponsored by the National Endowment for the Humanities and involving New York’s acclaimed Aquila Theatre, the American Philological Association that represents Classics professors in the U.S., the Urban Libraries Council and New York University’s Center for Ancient Studies. The events are designed to inspire people to come together to read, see, and think about classical literature and how it continues to influence and invigorate American cultural life. For more information about *Page and Stage*, visit [www.pageandstage.org](http://www.pageandstage.org) online.

Learn about other events at the San Diego Public Library’s Central Library and 35 branches, find links to numerous additional resources, or search for materials in the Library’s catalog online at [www.sandiegolibrary.org](http://www.sandiegolibrary.org).

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