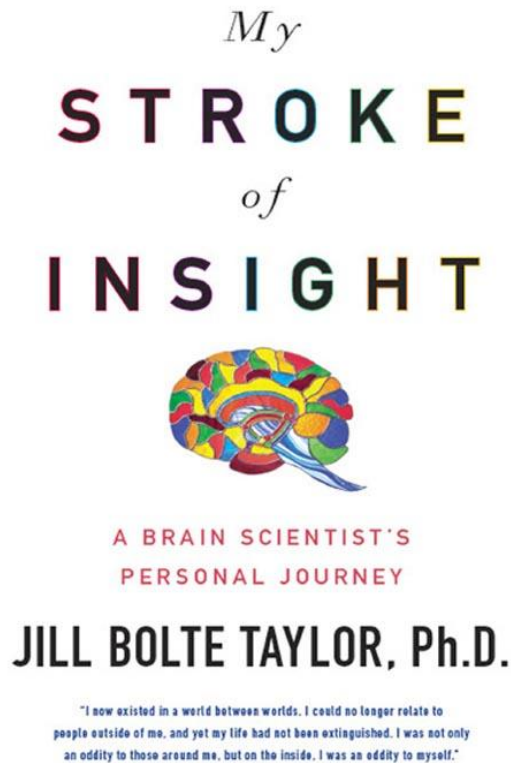


APL Book Discussion Club Meeting

Thursday, February 4, 7:00 p.m.

Albany Public Library - 2450 14th Avenue SE

Join Us!



My Stroke of Insight: A Brain Scientist's Personal Journey

By Jill Bolte Taylor, Ph.D.

One morning in late 1996, Taylor, a research scientist who worked at the Harvard Brain Tissue Resource Center (a.k.a., the Brain Bank), awoke with a sharp pain behind her left eye, and soon enough — as her speech and motor functions failed her, as she melted into what she called a euphoric stupor and lost all sense of where “Dr. Jill” ended and the rest of the universe began — she realized this was no ordinary headache. It was, she later learned, a blown AVM: the rupture of a congenitally deformed vein-artery connection deep inside her brain. She was in the first stage of a potentially killer stroke — and she was alone in her apartment and had lost the capacity to think or act rationally or even communicate with the outside world.

Part of the joy of this book is that nothing unfolds the way you’d expect. Taylor’s story at its darkest courses with gratitude and humor and, most of all, amazement, as she recounts what happened to her with Ph.D.-level clarity and awareness of detail combined with childlike exuberance. The sudden loss of her left-brain organizational and self-defining capabilities was not, for instance, terrifying. Life-threatening though her predicament was, Taylor saw her stroke as a gift of unparalleled awareness: the shattering of the self-created box we live in that we call “life.”

Ten years ago Dr. Jill Bolte Taylor was living in Boston teaching and performing brain research at Harvard Medical School. In addition, she was the national spokesperson for the Harvard Brain Bank. In 1996, her work was stopped when she experienced a major AVM stroke. At the age of 37, she could not walk, talk, read, write, or recall any of her life. With the help of her mother it took Jill eight years to completely recover.