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Best-Selling Memoirist and Novelist Dani Shapiro to Speak at Darien Library

Author : David Gurliacci

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Best-selling novelist Dani Shapiro will speak about her new book, *Inheritance: A Memoir of Genealogy, Paternity, and Love*, at 7 p.m., Thursday, Feb. 28 at Darien Library.

In the book, Shapiro recounts how a the staggering family secret was uncovered by a genealogy test. She also discusses the urgent ethical questions surrounding fertility treatments and DNA testing, and explores paternity, identity, and love.

— *an announcement from Darien Library*

Darien Library is proud to cosponsor this event with the Middlesex Genealogical Society. Books will be available for purchase courtesy of Barrett Bookstore. Refreshments will be served.

What makes us who we are? What combination of memory, history, biology, experience, and that ineffable thing called the soul defines us?

In the spring of 2016, through a genealogy website to which she had whimsically submitted her DNA for analysis, Dani Shapiro received the stunning news that her father was not her biological father. She woke up one morning and her entire history — the life she had lived — crumbled beneath her.

Inheritance is a book about secrets — secrets within families, kept out of shame or self-protectiveness; secrets we keep from one another in the name of love.

It is the story of a woman's urgent quest to unlock the story of her own identity, a story that has been scrupulously hidden from her for more than fifty years, years she had spent writing brilliantly, and compulsively, on themes of identity and family history.

It is a book about the extraordinary moment we live in—a moment in which science and technology have outpaced not only medical ethics but also the capacities of the human heart to contend with the consequences of what we discover.

- “*Inheritance* is an extraordinary memoir that speaks to themes as current as today's headlines and as old as human history. With unflinching curiosity and candor, Dani Shapiro explores the mystery of her own lineage as she questions the notion of lineage itself: What makes a father a father? And how are we shaped by our family lore? This beautifully crafted book is full of wisdom and heart, showing that what we don't know about our parents may not be as important as what we do.”

— *Will Schwalbe, author of Books for Living and The End of Your Life Book Club*

Dani Shapiro is the author of the memoirs *Hourglass*, *Still Writing*, *Devotion*, and *Slow Motion* and five novels, including *Black & White* and *Family History*.

Also an essayist and a journalist, Shapiro's short fiction, essays, and journalistic pieces have appeared in *The New Yorker*, *Granta*, *Tin House*, *One Story*, *Elle*, *Vogue*, *O*, *The Oprah Magazine*, *The New York Times*

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Book Review, the op-ed pages of the New York Times, and many other publications.

She has taught in the writing programs at Columbia, NYU, the New School, and Wesleyan University; she is cofounder of the Sirenland Writers Conference in Positano, Italy. She lives with her family in Litchfield County.