

Evening Book Group Recommendations for 2017

We Will Pick 10 Titles

Nonfiction:

[**Beyond Magenta: Transgender Teens Speak Out by Susan Kuklin p.192**](#)
[**ISBN:978-0763673680**](#)

A 2015 Stonewall Honor Book A groundbreaking work of LGBT literature takes an honest look at the life, love, and struggles of transgender teens. Author and photographer Susan Kuklin met and interviewed six transgender or gender-neutral young adults and used her considerable skills to represent them thoughtfully and respectfully before, during, and after their personal acknowledgment of gender preference. Portraits, family photographs, and candid images grace the pages, augmenting the emotional and physical journey each youth has taken. Each honest discussion and disclosure, whether joyful or heartbreaking, is completely different from the other because of family dynamics, living situations, gender, and the transition these teens make in recognition of their true selves.

[**Field Notes from a Catastrophe: Man, Nature, and Climate Change by Elizabeth Kolbert p.320 ISBN:978-1620409886**](#)

Elizabeth Kolbert's environmental classic *Field Notes from a Catastrophe* first developed out of a groundbreaking, National Magazine Award-winning three-part series in *The New Yorker*. She expanded it into a still-concise yet richly researched and damning book about climate change: a primer on the greatest challenge facing the world today. But in the years since, the story has continued to develop; the situation has become more dire, even as our understanding grows. Now, Kolbert returns to the defining book of her career. She'll add a chapter bringing things up-to-date on the existing text, plus she'll add three new chapters--on ocean acidification, the tar sands, and a Danish town that's gone carbon neutral--making it, again, a must-read for our moment.

[**Following Atticus by Tom Ryan p.304 ISBN:9780061997112**](#)

After a close friend died of cancer, middle-aged, overweight, acrophobic newspaperman Tom Ryan decided to pay tribute to her in a most unorthodox manner. Ryan and his friend, miniature schnauzer Atticus M. Finch, would attempt to climb all forty-eight of New Hampshire's four thousand- foot peaks twice in one winter while raising money for charity. It was an adventure of a lifetime, leading them across hundreds of miles and deep into an enchanting but dangerous winter wonderland. At the heart of the amazing journey was the extraordinary relationship they shared, one that blurred the line between man and dog. *Following Atticus* is an unforgettable true saga of adventure, friendship, and the unlikely of family, as one remarkable animal opens the eyes and heart of a tough-as-nails newspaperman to the world's beauty and its possibilities.

[**The Feud: The Hatfields & McCoys: The True Story by Dean King p. 464**](#)
[**ISBN:978-0316167079 \(2 recommendations\)**](#)

More than a century after the violence ended, the feud between the Hatfields and McCoys still evokes images of snaggletoothed rustics with a gun in one hand and a jug of moonshine whiskey in the other. The recent dramatized series on the History Channel attempted to present a more realistic view while regenerating interest in the affair. King, who served as an advisor on that series, goes much further in this well-written, superbly researched, but depressingly grim chronicle. The two families lived in relative

harmony for generations astride the Tug River, which forms the current boundary between Kentucky and West Virginia. The families traded with each other and even intermarried. The roots of the conflict, according to King, are found in the political and military tensions generated by the Civil War. After the war, the tensions quickly escalated into violence, which intensified as economic factors, family loyalty, and outside interference complicated matters. King paints an unrelentingly sad portrait of families locked in a tragic struggle from which even moderating members seemed unable to withdraw. This is an outstanding reexamination of a mythic but all too real and savage story.

Ladies of Liberty: The Women Who Shaped Our Nation by Cokie Roberts p.512 ISBN:978-0060782351

Cokie Roberts brings to life the extraordinary accomplishments of women who laid the groundwork for a better society. Recounted with insight and humor, and drawing on personal correspondence, private journals, and other primary sources, many of them previously unpublished, here are the fascinating and inspiring true stories of first ladies and freethinkers, educators and explorers. Featuring an exceptional group of women—including Abigail Adams, Dolley Madison, Rebecca Gratz, Louise Livingston, Sacagawea, and others—*Ladies of Liberty* sheds new light on the generation of heroines, reformers, and visionaries who helped shape our nation, finally giving these extraordinary ladies the recognition they so greatly deserve.

Luckiest Girl Alive by Jessica Knoll p. 368 ISBN: 978-1476789644

AN INSTANT NEW YORK TIMES AND USA TODAY BESTSELLER. Fans of *Gone Girl* and *The Girl on the Train* will thrill at “the perfect page-turner to start your summer” (*People*, Book of the Week): *Luckiest Girl Alive*—described by Reese Witherspoon as “one of those reads you just can’t put down!” HER PERFECT LIFE IS A PERFECT LIE. As a teenager at the prestigious Bradley School, Ani FaNelli endured a shocking, public humiliation that left her desperate to reinvent herself. Now, with a glamorous job, expensive wardrobe, and handsome blue blood fiancé, she’s *this close* to living the perfect life she’s worked so hard to achieve. But Ani has a secret. There’s something else buried in her past that still haunts her, something private and painful that threatens to bubble to the surface and destroy everything. With a singular voice and twists you won’t see coming, *Luckiest Girl Alive* explores the unbearable pressure that so many women feel to “have it all” and introduces a heroine whose sharp edges and cutthroat ambition have been protecting a scandalous truth, and a heart that’s bigger than it first appears. The question remains: will breaking her silence destroy all that she has worked for—or, will it at long last, set Ani free?

Missoula: Rape and the Justice System in a College Town by John Krakauer p.416 ISBN: 978-0804170567

Missoula, Montana, is a typical college town, home to a highly regarded state university whose beloved football team inspires a passionately loyal fan base. Between January 2008 and May 2012, hundreds of students reported sexual assaults to the local police. Few of the cases were properly handled by either the university or local authorities. In this, Missoula is also typical. In these pages, acclaimed journalist Jon Krakauer investigates a spate of campus rapes that occurred in Missoula over a four-year period. Taking the town as a case study for a crime that is sadly prevalent throughout the nation, Krakauer documents the experiences of five victims: their fear and self-doubt in the aftermath; the skepticism directed at them by police, prosecutors, and the public; their bravery in pushing forward and what it cost them. These stories cut through abstract ideological debate about acquaintance rape to demonstrate that it does not

happen because women are sending mixed signals or seeking attention. They are victims of a terrible crime, deserving of fairness from our justice system. Rigorously researched, rendered in incisive prose, *Missoula* stands as an essential call to action.

No God but God by Reza Aslan p.384 ISBN:9780812982442

A fascinating, accessible introduction to Islam from the author of the #1 *New York Times* bestseller *Zealot* INTERNATIONAL BESTSELLER • A finalist for the *Guardian* First Book Award In *No god but God*, internationally acclaimed scholar Reza Aslan explains Islam—the origins and evolution of the faith—in all its beauty and complexity. This updated edition addresses the events of the past decade, analyzing how they have influenced Islam’s position in modern culture. Aslan explores what the popular demonstrations pushing for democracy in the Middle East mean for the future of Islam in the region, how the Internet and social media have affected Islam’s evolution, and how the war on terror has altered the geopolitical balance of power in the Middle East. He also provides an update on the contemporary Muslim women’s movement, a discussion of the controversy over veiling in Europe, an in-depth history of Jihadism, and a look at how Muslims living in North America and Europe are changing the face of Islam. Timely and persuasive, *No god but God* is an elegantly written account that explains this magnificent yet misunderstood faith.

White Trash: The 400-Year Untold History of Class in America by Nancy Isenberg p.480 ISBN:978-0670785971

Now a *New York Times* bestseller “This estimable book rides into the summer doldrums like rural electrification. . . . It deals in the truths that matter.”—Dwight Garner, *The New York Times* “*White Trash* will change the way we think about our past and present.” —T. J. Stiles, Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *Custer’s Trials* In her groundbreaking history of the class system in America, what the *New York Times* hails as “formidable and truth-dealing,” Nancy Isenberg takes on our comforting myths about equality, uncovering the crucial legacy of the ever-present, always embarrassing—if occasionally entertaining—poor white trash. “When you turn an election into a three-ring circus, there’s always a chance that the dancing bear will win,” says Isenberg of the political climate surrounding Sarah Palin. And we recognize how right she is today. Yet the voters boosting Trump have been a permanent part of our American fabric, argues Isenberg. The wretched and landless poor have existed from the time of the earliest British colonial settlement. They were alternately known as “waste people,” “offals,” “rubbish,” “lazy lubbers,” and “crackers.” By the 1850s, the downtrodden included so-called “clay eaters” and “sandhillers,” known for prematurely aged children distinguished by their yellowish skin, ragged clothing, and listless minds. Surveying political rhetoric and policy, popular literature and scientific theories over four hundred years, Isenberg upends assumptions about America’s supposedly class-free society—where liberty and hard work were meant to ensure real social mobility. Poor whites were central to the rise of the Republican Party in the early nineteenth century, and the Civil War itself was fought over class issues nearly as much as it was fought over slavery. Reconstruction pitted poor white trash against newly freed slaves, which factored in the rise of eugenics—a widely popular movement embraced by Theodore Roosevelt that targeted poor whites for sterilization. These poor were at the heart of New Deal reforms and LBJ’s Great Society; they haunt us in reality TV shows like *Here Comes Honey Boo Boo* and *Duck Dynasty*. Marginalized as a class, white trash have always been at or near the center of major political debates over the character of the American identity. We acknowledge racial injustice as an ugly stain on our nation’s history. With Isenberg’s landmark book, we will have to face the truth about the enduring, malevolent nature of class as well.

[The Witches: Salem, 1692 by Stacy Schiff p.512 ISBN: 978-0316200608](#)

In 1692, at the edge of the New England wilderness, an entire village went insane. Everyone knows the story: The pre-teen daughters of the local minister are mysteriously overcome by convulsions, their uncontrollable screaming sending the superstitious community into fear and confusion. Lacking other explanations--adolescent rebellion, maybe?--Satanic influence is suspected, and accusations of witchcraft soon fly like enchanted broomsticks. The town is pitted against itself, and by the time the hysteria fades, 19 men and women are hanged, another pressed to death. But what actually happened? Pulitzer Prize-winner Stacy Schiff's *The Witches: Salem, 1692* steps back from more than three centuries of hyperbole and supposition, giving us our most complete account yet. It can't have been easy: As Schiff points out early in the book, the Puritans of Salem village were often assiduous diarists and record-keepers, but first-hand accounts of the months of the hysteria are mysteriously rare--and those that exist are mainly unreliable. To construct her history, Schiff went through the looking glass, compiling seemingly every fact available to create a historically accurate narrative of events while placing it within the cultural context of 17th century New England. The results are obvious: this book is dense with facts and a large cast of characters, and readers must commit. But Schiff keeps the proceedings rolling with wry humor and an eye for the peculiar-yet-illuminating detail. This isn't *The Crucible* or *Blair Witch*; it's light on sensationalism, but rife with real-life toil-and-trouble. The truth, as always, is strange enough.

Poetry:

[After Frost: an anthology of poetry from New England edited by Henry Lyman p.240 ISBN: 978-1558490413](#)

Robert Frost has long dominated the public's image of New England poetry, but who are the poets who follow him in time and how have they expressed their visions of the landscape, the individual, and the community? This volume brings together the work of thirty distinguished poets to convey the vitality and variety of the region's poetic creation during much of the twentieth century. *After Frost* is published in association with the New England Foundation for the Humanities, which has sponsored a program of reading and discussion groups with poets across the region using this anthology. The works of 30 major New England poets of the 20th century published in conjunction with the New England Foundation for the Humanities. Readings on cassette are included.

[Collected Poems by Jane Kenyon p.368 ISBN:978-1555974787](#)

Jane Kenyon is one of America's most prized contemporary poets. Her previous collection, *Otherwise: New and Selected Poems*, published just after her death in 1995, has been a favorite among readers, with more than 80,000 copies in print, and is a contemporary classic. *Collected Poems* assembles all of Kenyon's published poetry in one book. Included here are the complete poems found in her four previous volumes—*From Room to Room*, *The Boat of Quiet Hours*, *Let Evening Come*, and *Constance*—as well as the poems that appear in her posthumous volumes *Otherwise* and *A Hundred White Daffodils*, four poems never before published in book form, and her translations in *Twenty Poems of Anna Akhmatova*.

[New and Selected Poems by Mary Oliver p. 272 ISBN: 978-0807068779](#)

When *New and Selected Poems* was originally published in 1992, Mary Oliver was awarded the National Book Award. In the fourteen years since its initial appearance it has become one of the best-selling volumes of poetry in the country. This collection features thirty poems published only in this volume as well as selections from the poet's first eight books. Mary Oliver's perceptive, brilliantly crafted poems about the natural landscape and the fundamental questions of life and death have won high praise from critics and readers alike. "Do you love this world?" she interrupts a poem about peonies to ask the reader. "Do you cherish your humble and silky life?" She makes us see the extraordinary in our everyday lives, how something as common as light can be "an invitation/to happiness,/and that happiness,/when it's done right,/is a kind of holiness,/palpable and redemptive." She illuminates how a near miss with an alligator can be the catalyst for seeing the world "as if for the second time/the way it really is." Oliver's passionate demonstrations of delight are powerful reminders of the bond between every individual, all living things, and the natural world. Winner of the National Book Award for Poetry. Oliver, who also won the Pulitzer Prize, has lived in New England for many years.

[The Selected Poems of Donald Hall by Donald Hall p. 160 ISBN: 978-0544555600](#)

Former poet laureate Donald Hall selects the essential work from a moving and brilliant life in poetry. The ability to write poems has "abandoned" Donald Hall, now in his eighties, one of the most significant — and beloved — poets of his generation. Instead of creating new poems, he has looked back over his astonishingly rich body of work and hand-picked poems for this final, concise volume that will delight, and endure. *The Selected Poems of Donald Hall* is the definitive collection, showcasing poems rich with humor and eros and "a kind of simplicity that succeeds in engaging the reader in the first few lines" (Billy Collins). "However wrenching [Hall's poems] may be from line to line, they tell a story that is essentially reassuring: art and love are compatible, genius is companionable, and people stand by one another in the end" (*New York Times Book Review*).

Biography/Memoir:

[Blue Highways: A Journey Into America by William Least Heat-Moon and William Least Heat Moon p.448 ISBN: 978-0316353298](#)

First published in 1982, William Least Heat-Moon's account of his journey along the back roads of the United States (marked with the color blue on old highway maps) has become something of a classic. When he loses his job and his wife on the same cold February day, he is struck by inspiration: "A man who couldn't make things go right could at least go. He could quit trying to get out of the way of life. Chuck routine. Live the real jeopardy of circumstance. It was a question of dignity." Driving cross-country in a van named Ghost Dancing, Heat-Moon (the name the Sioux give to the moon of midsummer nights) meets up with all manner of folk, from a man in Grayville, Illinois, "whose cap told me what fertilizer he used" to Scott Chisholm, "a Canadian citizen ... [who] had lived in this country longer than in Canada and liked the United States but wouldn't admit it for fear of having to pay off bets he made years earlier when he first 'came over' that the U.S. is a place no Canadian could ever love." Accompanied by his

photographs, Heat-Moon's literary portraits of ordinary Americans should not be merely read, but savored.

[Fire Shut Up in My Bones by Charles M. Blow p.240](#)

[ISBN:978-0544228047](#)

A gorgeous, moving memoir of how one of America's most innovative and respected journalists found his voice by coming to terms with a painful past. *New York Times* columnist Charles M. Blow mines the compelling poetry of the out-of-time African-American Louisiana town where he grew up -- a place where slavery's legacy felt astonishingly close, reverberating in the elders' stories and in the near-constant wash of violence. Blow's attachment to his mother -- a fiercely driven woman with five sons, brass knuckles in her glove box, a job plucking poultry at a nearby factory, a soon-to-be-ex husband, and a love of newspapers and learning -- cannot protect him from secret abuse at the hands of an older cousin. It's damage that triggers years of anger and searing self-questioning. Finally, Blow escapes to a nearby state university, where he joins a black fraternity after a passage of brutal hazing, and then enters a world of racial and sexual privilege that feels like everything he's ever needed and wanted, until he's called upon, himself, to become the one perpetuating the shocking abuse. A powerfully redemptive memoir that both fits the tradition of African-American storytelling from the South, and gives it an indelible new slant.

[Hold Still: A Memoir with Photographs by Sally Mann p.496](#)

[ISBN:978-0316247757](#)

NATIONAL BOOK AWARD FINALIST ONE OF THE BEST BOOKS OF THE YEAR *The New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *The San Francisco Chronicle*, *Vogue*, *NPR*, *Publishers Weekly*, *BookPage* A revealing and beautifully written memoir and family history from acclaimed photographer Sally Mann. In this groundbreaking book, a unique interplay of narrative and image, Mann's preoccupation with family, race, mortality, and the storied landscape of the American South are revealed as almost genetically predetermined, written into her DNA by the family history that precedes her. Sorting through boxes of family papers and yellowed photographs she finds more than she bargained for: "deceit and scandal, alcohol, domestic abuse, car crashes, bogeymen, clandestine affairs, dearly loved and disputed family land . . . racial complications, vast sums of money made and lost, the return of the prodigal son, and maybe even bloody murder." In lyrical prose and startlingly revealing photographs, she crafts a totally original form of personal history that has the page-turning drama of a great novel but is firmly rooted in the fertile soil of her own life.

[My Beloved World by Sonia Sotomayor p. 336 978-0307594884](#)

The first Hispanic and third woman appointed to the United States Supreme Court, Sonia Sotomayor has become an instant American icon. Now, with a candor and intimacy never undertaken by a sitting Justice, she recounts her life from a Bronx housing project to the federal bench, a journey that offers an inspiring testament to her own extraordinary determination and the power of believing in oneself. Here is the story of a precarious childhood, with an alcoholic father (who would die when she was nine) and a devoted but overburdened mother, and of the refuge a little girl took from the turmoil at home with her passionately spirited paternal grandmother. But it was when she was diagnosed with juvenile diabetes that the precocious Sonia recognized she must ultimately depend on herself. She would learn to give herself the insulin shots she needed to survive and soon imagined a path to a different life. With only television characters for her professional role models, and little understanding of what was involved, she determined to become a lawyer, a dream that would sustain her on an unlikely course, from valedictorian of her high school class to the highest honors at Princeton, Yale Law School, the New York County District Attorney's

office, private practice, and appointment to the Federal District Court before the age of forty. Along the way we see how she was shaped by her invaluable mentors, a failed marriage, and the modern version of extended family she has created from cherished friends and their children. Through her still-astonished eyes, America's infinite possibilities are envisioned anew in this warm and honest book, destined to become a classic of self-invention and self-discovery.

[Not Fade Away: A Short Life Well Lived by Laurence Shames and Peter Barton p.224 ISBN: 978-0060737313](#)

"I'm hardly the first person to notice that there is only the present, constantly," writes Barton in this extraordinary memoir. "The present moment is lived, and relieved; written, and rewritten. Every previous version still inhabits it." What gives this insight and the many others that follow uncommon power is the ever present fact that Barton, a pioneering entrepreneur in the cable television industry, was dying of stomach cancer as he wrote them. Alternating chapters with mystery writer Shames (*The Naked Detective*), Barton, who died in September, 2002, at 51, offers us-and his wife and three children-his final rewrite of a life filled with the optimism and idealism of his generation. Barton tells us how it feels to die while the party is still raging, offering us glimpses of a life that packed in everything from being a professional ski bum to working as an aide to New York State governor Hugh Carey to huge success as a visionary businessman (Barton helped found MTV, among other achievements). Readers will be knocked out by his honesty and his utter lack of self-pity or sentimentality. The "gift" of terminal cancer, according to Barton, is that "it doesn't kill you all at once. It gives you time to set your house in order.... It gives you time to think, to sum things up." Setting his house in order included taking his family for a balloon ride at dawn. Summing up what matters, he reminds us that it is the large and small moments of pleasure and love, those very present moments, that redeem us in the end. This is a very beautiful book about how to live.

Classics:

[Nicholas Nickleby by Charles Dickens p.864 ISBN-13: 978-0140435122](#)

'The novel **has everything: an absorbing melodrama, with a supporting cast of heroes, villains and eccentrics, set in a London where vast wealth and desperate poverty live cheek-by-jowl**' **Jasper Rees, The Times** When Nicholas Nickleby is left penniless after his father's death, he appeals to his wealthy uncle to help him find work and to protect his mother and sister. But Ralph Nickleby proves both hard-hearted and unscrupulous, and Nicholas finds himself forced to make his own way in the world. His adventures gave Dickens the opportunity to portray an extraordinary gallery of rogues and eccentrics: Wackford Squeers, the tyrannical headmaster of Dotheboys Hall, a school for unwanted boys, the slow-witted orphan Smike, rescued by Nicholas, the pretentious Mantalins and the gloriously theatrical Mr and Mrs Crummels and their daughter, the 'infant phenomenon'. Like many of Dickens's novels, *Nicholas Nickleby* is characterised by his outrage at cruelty and social injustice, but it is also a flamboyantly exuberant work, whose loose, haphazard progress harks back to the picaresque novels of Tobias Smollett and Henry Fielding.

[**The Old Man and the Sea by Ernest Hemingway p.48 ISBN: 978-1781396766**](#)

The Old Man and the Sea, an apparently simple fable, represents the mature Hemingway at his best. He was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature soon after its publication, and half a century later it is still one of his most read books.

[**Wuthering Heights by Emily Bronte p. 400 ISBN: 978-0007350810**](#)

'Is Mr. Heathcliff a man? If so, is he mad? And if not, is he a devil?' Set on the bleak moors of Yorkshire, Lockwood is forced to seek shelter at Wuthering Heights, the home of his new landlord, Heathcliff. The intense and wildly passionate Heathcliff tells the story of his life, his all-consuming love for Catherine Earnshaw and the doomed outcome of that relationship, leading to his revenge. Poetic, complex and grand in its scope, Emily Brontë's masterpiece is considered one of the most unique gothic novels of its time.

Graphic Novels:

[**Can't We Talk About Something More Pleasant?: A Memoir by Roz Chast p.240 ISBN:9781608198061**](#)

2014 NATIONAL BOOK AWARD FINALIST In her first memoir, Roz Chast brings her signature wit to the topic of aging parents. Spanning the last several years of their lives and told through four-color cartoons, family photos, and documents, and a narrative as rife with laughs as it is with tears, Chast's memoir is both comfort and comic relief for anyone experiencing the life-altering loss of elderly parents. When it came to her elderly mother and father, Roz held to the practices of denial, avoidance, and distraction. But when Elizabeth Chast climbed a ladder to locate an old souvenir from the "crazy closet"—with predictable results—the tools that had served Roz well through her parents' seventies, eighties, and into their early nineties could no longer be deployed. While the particulars are Chast-ian in their idiosyncrasies—an anxious father who had relied heavily on his wife for stability as he slipped into dementia and a former assistant principal mother whose overbearing personality had sidelined Roz for decades—the themes are universal: adult children accepting a parental role; aging and unstable parents leaving a family home for an institution; dealing with uncomfortable physical intimacies; managing logistics; and hiring strangers to provide the most personal care. An amazing portrait of two lives at their end and an only child coping as best she can, *Can't We Talk about Something More Pleasant* will show the full range of Roz Chast's talent as cartoonist and storyteller.

[**Hark a Vagrant by Kate Beaton p.160 ISBN: 978-1770460607**](#)

FEATURED ON MORE THAN TWENTY BEST-OF LISTS, INCLUDING TIME, AMAZON, E! AND PUBLISHERS WEEKLY! *Hark! A Vagrant* is an uproarious romp through history and literature seen through the sharp, contemporary lens of *New Yorker* cartoonist and comics sensation Kate Beaton. No era or tome emerges unscathed as Beaton rightly skewers the Western world's revolutionaries, leaders, sycophants, and suffragists while equally honing her wit on the hapless heroes, heroines, and villains of the best-loved fiction.

She deftly points out what really happened when Brahms fell asleep listening to Liszt, that the world's first hipsters were obviously the Incroyables and the Merveilleuses from eighteenth-century France, that Susan B. Anthony is, of course, a "Samantha," and that the polite banality of Canadian culture never gets old. *Hark! A Vagrant* features sexy Batman, the true stories behind classic *Nancy Drew* covers, and Queen Elizabeth doing the albatross. As the 500,000 unique monthly visitors to harkavagrant.com already know, no one turns the ironic absurdities of history and literature into comedic fodder as hilariously as Beaton.

[Kill My Mother by Jules Feiffer p. 160 ISBN:978-0871403148](#)

A *Vanity Fair* Best Book of 2014. A *Kirkus Reviews* Best Fiction Book of 2014 When three daunting dolls intersect with one hapless heroine and a hard-boiled private eye, deception, betrayal, and murder stalk every mean street in...*Kill My Mother*. Adding to a legendary career that includes a Pulitzer Prize, an Academy Award, Obie Awards, and Lifetime Achievement Awards from the National Cartoonist Society and the Writers Guild of America, Jules Feiffer now presents his first noir graphic novel. *Kill My Mother* is a loving homage to the pulp-inspired films and comic strips of his youth. Channeling Eisner's *The Spirit*, along with the likes of Hammett, Chandler, Cain, John Huston, and Billy Wilder, and spiced with the deft humor for which Feiffer is renowned, *Kill My Mother* centers on five formidable women from two unrelated families, linked fatefully and fatally by a has-been, hard-drinking private detective. As our story begins, we meet Annie Hannigan, an out-of-control teenager, jitterbugging in the 1930s. Annie dreams of offing her mother, Elsie, whom she blames for abandoning her for a job soon after her husband, a cop, is shot and killed. Now, employed by her husband's best friend—an over-the-hill and perpetually soused private eye—Elsie finds herself covering up his missteps as she is drawn into a case of a mysterious client, who leads her into a decade-long drama of deception and dual identities sprawling from the Depression era to World War II Hollywood and the jungles of the South Pacific. Along with three femme fatales, an obsessed daughter, and a loner heroine, *Kill My Mother* features a fighter turned tap dancer, a small-time thug who dreams of being a hit man, a name-dropping cab driver, a communist liquor store owner, and a hunky movie star with a mind-boggling secret. Culminating in a U.S.O. tour on a war-torn Pacific island, this disparate band of old enemies congregate to settle scores. In a drawing style derived from *Steve Canyon* and *The Spirit*, Feiffer combines his long-honed skills as cartoonist, playwright, and screenwriter to draw us into this seductively menacing world where streets are black with soot and rain, and base motives and betrayal are served on the rocks in bars unsafe to enter. Bluesy, fast-moving, and funny, *Kill My Mother* is a trip to Hammett-Chandler-Cain Land: a noir-graphic novel like the movies they don't make anymore.

Fiction:

[At the Edge of the Orchard by Tracy Chevalier p. 304 ISBN: 978-0525953005](#)

From internationally bestselling author Tracy Chevalier, a riveting drama of a pioneer family on the American frontier 1838: James and Sadie Goodenough have settled where their wagon got stuck – in the muddy, stagnant swamps of northwest Ohio. They and their five children work relentlessly to tame their patch of land, buying saplings from a local tree man known as John Appleseed so they can cultivate the fifty apple trees required to stake their claim on the property. But the orchard they plant sows the seeds of

a long battle. James loves the apples, reminders of an easier life back in Connecticut; while Sadie prefers the applejack they make, an alcoholic refuge from brutal frontier life. 1853: Their youngest child Robert is wandering through Gold Rush California. Restless and haunted by the broken family he left behind, he has made his way alone across the country. In the redwood and giant sequoia groves he finds some solace, collecting seeds for a naturalist who sells plants from the new world to the gardeners of England. But you can run only so far, even in America, and when Robert's past makes an unexpected appearance he must decide whether to strike out again or stake his own claim to a home at last. Chevalier tells a fierce, beautifully crafted story in *At the Edge of the Orchard*, her most graceful and richly imagined work yet.

[The Atomic Weight of Love by Elizabeth J. Church p. 352](#)

[ISBN"978-161204846](#)

In her sweeping debut novel, Elizabeth J. Church takes us from the World War II years in Chicago to the vast sun-parched canyons of New Mexico in the 1970s as we follow the journey of a driven, spirited young woman, Meridian Wallace, whose scientific ambitions are subverted by the expectations of her era. In 1941, at seventeen years old, Meridian begins her ornithology studies at the University of Chicago. She is soon drawn to Alden Whetstone, a brilliant, complicated physics professor who opens her eyes to the fundamentals and poetry of his field, the beauty of motion, space and time, the delicate balance of force and energy that allows a bird to fly. Entranced and in love, Meridian defers her own career path and follows Alden west to Los Alamos, where he is engaged in a secret government project (later known to be the atomic bomb). In married life, though, she feels lost and left behind. She channels her academic ambitions into studying a particular family of crows, whose free life and companionship are the very things that seem beyond her reach. There in her canyons, years later at the dawn of the 1970s, with counterculture youth filling the streets and protests against the war rupturing college campuses across the country, Meridian meets Clay, young geologist and veteran of the Vietnam War, and together they seek ways to mend what the world has broken. Exquisitely capturing the claustrophobic eras of 1940s and 1950s America, *The Atomic Weight of Love* also examines the changing roles of women during the decades that followed. And in Meridian Wallace we find an unforgettable heroine whose metamorphosis shows how the women's movement opened up the world for a whole generation.

[The Book of Speculation: A Novel by Erika Swyler p. 384](#)

[ISBN:978-1250055637](#)

As Simon, a lonely research librarian, searches frantically for the key to a curse that might be killing the women in his family, he learns strange and fascinating secrets about their past. A tale full of magic and family mystery that will keep you up all night reading."—Isaac Fitzgerald, BuzzFeed Simon Watson, a young librarian, lives alone in a house that is slowly crumbling toward the Long Island Sound. His parents are long dead. His mother, a circus mermaid who made her living by holding her breath, drowned in the very water his house overlooks. His younger sister, Enola, ran off six years ago and now reads tarot cards for a traveling carnival. One June day, an old book arrives on Simon's doorstep, sent by an antiquarian bookseller who purchased it on speculation. Fragile and water damaged, the book is a log from the owner of a traveling carnival in the 1700s, who reports strange and magical things, including the drowning death of a circus mermaid. Since then, generations of "mermaids" in Simon's family have drowned—always on July 24, which is only weeks away. As his friend Alice looks on with alarm, Simon becomes increasingly worried about his sister. Could there be a curse on Simon's family? What does it have to do with the book, and can he get to the heart of the mystery in time to save Enola? In the tradition of Sara Gruen's *Water for Elephants*, Erin Morgenstern's *The Night Circus*, and Elizabeth Kostova's *The Historian*, *The Book of*

Speculation--with two-color illustrations by the author--is Erika Swyler's moving debut novel about the power of books, family, and magic.

Burr by Gore Vidal p.448 ISBN:978-0375708732

For readers who can't get enough of the hit Broadway musical *Hamilton*, Gore Vidal's stunning novel about Aaron Burr, the man who killed Alexander Hamilton in a duel—and who served as a successful, if often feared, statesman of our fledgling nation. Here is an extraordinary portrait of one of the most complicated—and misunderstood—figures among the Founding Fathers. In 1804, while serving as vice president, Aaron Burr fought a duel with his political nemesis, Alexander Hamilton, and killed him. In 1807, he was arrested, tried, and acquitted of treason. In 1833, Burr is newly married, an aging statesman considered a monster by many. But he is determined to tell his own story, and he chooses to confide in a young New York City journalist named Charles Schermerhorn Schuyler. Together, they explore both Burr's past—and the continuing civic drama of their young nation. *Burr* is the first novel in Gore Vidal's Narratives of Empire series, which spans the history of the United States from the Revolution to post-World War II. With their broad canvas and sprawling cast of fictional and historical characters, these novels present a panorama of American politics and imperialism, as interpreted by one of our most incisive and ironic observers.

A Constellation of Vital Phenomena: A Novel by Anthony Marra p. 416 ISBN:9780770436420

New York Times Notable Book of the Year * *Washington Post* Top Ten Book of the Year In a small rural village in Chechnya, eight-year-old Havva watches from the woods as Russian soldiers abduct her father in the middle of the night and then set fire to her home. When their lifelong neighbor Akhmed finds Havva hiding in the forest with a strange blue suitcase, he makes a decision that will forever change their lives. He will seek refuge at the abandoned hospital where the sole remaining doctor, Sonja Rabina, treats the wounded. For Sonja, the arrival of Akhmed and Havva is an unwelcome surprise. Weary and overburdened, she has no desire to take on additional risk and responsibility. But over the course of five extraordinary days, Sonja's world will shift on its axis and reveal the intricate pattern of connections that weaves together the pasts of these three unlikely companions and unexpectedly decides their fate. A story of the transcendent power of love in wartime, *A Constellation of Vital Phenomena* is a work of sweeping breadth, profound compassion, and lasting significance.

Descent: A Novel by Tim Johnston p.400 ISBN:978-1616204778

The Rocky Mountains have cast their spell over the Courtlands, who are taking a family vacation before their daughter leaves for college. But when Caitlin and her younger brother, Sean, go out for an early morning run and only Sean returns, the mountains become as terrifying as they are majestic. Written with a precision that captures every emotion, every moment of fear, as each member of the family searches for answers, *Descent* races like an avalanche toward its heart-pounding conclusion. "Read this astonishing novel . . . The magic of his prose equals the horror of Johnston's story." —The Washington Post "A compelling thriller that is both creepy and literary . . . *Descent* is not just a mystery. It is an emotional story of evil, fear, acceptance and irony." —The Denver Post "What makes the novel unforgettable is its sense of character, its deliberate, unadorned prose and Johnston's unflinching exploration of human endurance, physical and psychological." —Miami Herald "A super-charged, addictive read." —The Missourian "An original and psychologically deep thriller." —Outside magazine "Outstanding . . . The days when you had to choose between a great story and a great piece of writing? Gone." —Esquire "[A] dazzling debut . . . Exquisitely crafted." —The Dallas Morning News "Incredibly

powerful, richly atmospheric.” —Minneapolis Star Tribune “ [An] engulfing thriller-cum-western.” —The New York Times Book Review “Brilliant . . . As gripping as any Everest expedition.” —Peter Heller

[A Dictionary of Mutual Understanding by Jackie Copleton p.304](#)

[ISBN:978-0143128250](#)

When Amaterasu Takahashi opens the door of her Philadelphia home to a badly scarred man claiming to be her grandson, she doesn't believe him. Her grandson and her daughter, Yuko, perished nearly forty years ago during the bombing of Nagasaki. But the man carries with him a collection of sealed private letters that open a Pandora's Box of family secrets Ama had sworn to leave behind when she fled Japan. She is forced to confront her memories of the years before the war: of the daughter she tried too hard to protect and the love affair that would drive them apart, and even further back, to the long, sake-pouring nights at a hostess bar where Ama first learned that a soft heart was a dangerous thing. Will Ama allow herself to believe in a miracle?

[Dollbaby: A Novel by Laura Lane McNeal p.352 ISBN:978-0143127499](#)

When Ibby Bell's father dies unexpectedly in the summer of 1964, her mother unceremoniously deposits Ibby with her eccentric grandmother Fannie and throws in her father's urn for good measure. Fannie's New Orleans house is like no place Ibby has ever been—and Fannie, who has a tendency to end up in the local asylum—is like no one she has ever met. Fortunately, Fannie's black cook, Queenie, and her smart-mouthed daughter, Dollbaby, take it upon themselves to initiate Ibby into the ways of the South, both its grand traditions and its darkest secrets. For Fannie's own family history is fraught with tragedy, hidden behind the closed rooms in her ornate Uptown mansion. It will take Ibby's arrival to begin to unlock the mysteries there. And it will take Queenie and Dollbaby's hard-won wisdom to show Ibby that family can sometimes be found in the least expected places. For fans of *Saving CeeCee Honeycutt* and *The Help*, *Dollbaby* brings to life the charm and unrest of 1960s New Orleans through the eyes of a young girl learning to understand race for the first time. By turns uplifting and funny, poignant and full of verve, *Dollbaby* is a novel readers will take to their hearts.

[Glory Over Everything: Beyond the Kitchen House by Kathleen](#)

[Grissom p.384 ISBN:978-1476748443](#)

From the author of the *New York Times* bestseller and beloved book club favorite *The Kitchen House*, a novel of family and long-buried secrets along the treacherous Underground Railroad. Jamie Pyke, son of both a slave and master of Tall Oakes, has a deadly secret that compels him to take a treacherous journey through the Underground Railroad. Published in 2010, *The Kitchen House* became a grassroots bestseller. Fans connected so deeply to the book's characters that the author, Kathleen Grissom, found herself being asked over and over “what happens next?” The wait is finally over. This new, stand-alone novel opens in 1830, and Jamie, who fled from the Virginian plantation he once called home, is passing in Philadelphia society as a wealthy white silversmith. After many years of striving, Jamie has achieved acclaim and security, only to discover that his aristocratic lover Caroline is pregnant. Before he can reveal his real identity to her, he learns that his beloved servant Pan has been captured and sold into slavery in the South. Pan's father, to whom Jamie owes a great debt, pleads for Jamie's help, and Jamie agrees, knowing the journey will take him perilously close to Tall Oakes and the ruthless slave hunter who is still searching for him. Meanwhile, Caroline's father learns and exposes Jamie's secret, and Jamie loses his home, his business, and finally Caroline. Heartbroken and with nothing to lose, Jamie embarks on a trip to a North Carolina plantation where Pan is being held with a former Tall Oakes slave named Sukey, who is

intent on getting Pan to the Underground Railroad. Soon the three of them are running through the Great Dismal Swamp, the notoriously deadly hiding place for escaped slaves. Though they have help from those in the Underground Railroad, not all of them will make it out alive.

[The Guest Room: A Novel by Chris Bohjalian p. 336 ISBN: 978-0385538893](#)

From the *New York Times* bestselling author of *Midwives* and *The Sandcastle Girls* comes the spellbinding tale of a party gone horribly wrong: two men lie dead in a suburban living room, two women are on the run from police, and a marriage is ripping apart at the seams. When Kristin Chapman agrees to let her husband, Richard, host his brother's bachelor party, she expects a certain amount of debauchery. She brings their young daughter to Manhattan for the evening, leaving her Westchester home to the men and their hired entertainment. What she does not expect is this: bacchanalian drunkenness, her husband sharing a dangerously intimate moment in the guest room, and two women stabbing and killing their Russian bodyguards before driving off into the night. In the aftermath, Kristin and Richard's life rapidly spirals into nightmare. The police throw them out of their home, now a crime scene, Richard's investment banking firm puts him on indefinite leave, and Kristin is unsure if she can forgive her husband for the moment he shared with a dark-haired girl in the guest room. But the dark-haired girl, Alexandra, faces a much graver danger. In one breathless, violent night, she is free, running to escape the police who will arrest her and the gangsters who will kill her in a heartbeat. A captivating, chilling story about shame and scandal, *The Guest Room* is a riveting novel from one of our greatest storytellers.

[I Don't Know How She Does It by Alison Pearson p. 337 ISBN:978-0375713750 \(2 recommendations\)](#)

Allison Pearson's debut novel, *I Don't Know How She Does It*, is a rare and beautiful hybrid: a devastatingly funny novel that's also a compelling fictional world. You want to climb inside this book and inhabit it. However, you might find it pretty messy once you're in there. Narrator Kate Reddy is the manager of a hedge fund and mother of two small children. The book opens with an emblematic scene as Kate "distresses" a store-bought mince pie to make it appear homemade. Her days are measured in increments of minutes and even seconds; her fund stays organized but her house and family are falling apart. The book is a pearly string of great lines. Here's Kate on lack of sleep: "They're right to call it a broken night.... You crawl back to bed and you lie there trying to do the jigsaw of sleep with half the pieces missing." On baby boys: "A mother of a one-year-old son is a movie star in a world without critics." On subtle office dynamics: The women in the offices of EMF [Kate's firm] don't tend to display pictures of their kids. The higher they go up the ladder, the fewer the photographs. If a man has pictures of kids on his desk, it enhances his humanity; if a woman has them it decreases hers. Why? Because he's not supposed to be home with the children; she is. There's inherent drama here: Kate is wildly appealing, and we want things to work out for her. In the end, the book isn't a just collection of clever lines on the theme of working motherhood; it's a real, rich novel about a character we come to cherish.

[The Improbability of Love by Hannah Rothschild p.416 ISBN: 9781101874141](#)

Wickedly funny, this totally engaging, richly observed first novel by Hannah Rothschild is a tour de force. Its sweeping narrative and cast of wildly colorful characters takes you behind the scenes of a London auction house, into the secret operations of a powerful art dealer, to a flamboyant eighteenth-century-style dinner party, and into a modest living room in Berlin, among many other unexpected settings. In *The Improbability of Love* we meet Annie McDee, thirty-one, who is working as a chef for two rather sinister art dealers. Recovering from the end of a long-term relationship, she is searching in a neglected secondhand shop for a birthday present for her unsuitable new lover. Hidden behind a rubber plant on top of a file cabinet, a grimy painting catches her eye. After spending her meager savings on the picture, Annie prepares an elaborate birthday dinner for two, only to be stood up. The painting becomes hers, and as it turns out, Annie has stumbled across a lost masterpiece by one of the most important French painters of the eighteenth century. But who painted this masterpiece is not clear at first. Soon Annie finds herself pursued by interested parties who would do anything to possess her picture. For a gloomy, exiled Russian oligarch, an avaricious sheikha, a desperate auctioneer, and an unscrupulous dealer, among others, the painting embodies their greatest hopes and fears. In her search for the painting's identity, Annie will unwittingly uncover some of the darkest secrets of European history—as well as the possibility of falling in love again. Irreverent, witty, bittersweet, *The Improbability of Love* draws an unforgettable portrait of the London art scene, but it is also an exuberant and unexpected journey through life's highs and lows and the complexities of love and loss.

[Ireland: A Novel by Frank Delaney p. 576 ISBN: 978-0060563468](#)

From a land famous for storytelling comes an "absolute masterpiece"* -- an epic novel of Ireland that captures the intimate, passionate texture of the Irish spirit. One wintry evening in 1951, an itinerant storyteller -- a Seanchai, the very last practitioner of a fabled tradition extending back hundreds of years -- arrives unannounced at a house in the Irish countryside. In exchange for a bed and a warm meal, he invites his hosts and some of their neighbors to join him by the fireside, and begins to tell formative stories of Ireland's history. One of his listeners, a nine-year-old boy, grows so entranced by the story-telling that, when the old man leaves abruptly under mysterious circumstances, the boy devotes himself to finding him again. Ronan's search for the Storyteller becomes both a journey of self-discovery and an immersion into the sometimes-conflicting histories of his native land. As the long-unspoken secrets of his own family begin to reveal themselves, he becomes increasingly single-minded in pursuit of the old man, who he fears may already be dead. But Ronan's personal path also leads him deeper and deeper into the history and mythology of Ireland itself, in all its drama, intrigue, and heroic. *Ireland* travels through the centuries, interweaving Ronan's quest for the Storyteller with a richly evocative unfolding of the great moments in Irish history, ranging from the savage grip of the Ice Age to the green and troubled land of tourist brochures and political unrest. Along the way, we meet foolish kings and innocent monks, fabled saints and great works of art, shrewd Normanraiders, strong tribal leaders, poets, politicians, and lovers. Each illuminates the magic of Ireland and the eternal connection of its people to the land. A sweeping novel of huge ambition, *Ireland* is the beautifully told story of a remarkable nation. From the epic sweep of its telling to the precision of its characters -- great and small, tragic and comic -- it rings with the truth of a writer passionate about his country and in full command of his craft.

[Its Kind of a Funny Story by Ned Vizzini p. 464 ISBN:978-0786851973](#)

When Craig Gilner gets into Manhattan's exclusive Executive Pre-Professional High School, it's the culmination of a year of intense focus and grinding hard work. Now he has to actually attend the school with other equally high-performing students. Oops. And so the unraveling begins, with a depressed Craig spending more time smoking dope and throwing up than studying. Although medication helps his

depression, he decides to stop taking it. Soon after, he makes another decision: to commit suicide. A call to a suicide hotline gets him into a psychiatric hospital, where he is finally able to face his demons. Readers must suspend their disbelief big time for this to work. Because the teen psych ward is undergoing renovations, Craig is put in with adults, which provides the narrative with an eccentric cast of characters rather than just similarly screwed-up teens. And in his five days in the hospital, Craig manages to cure his eating disorder, find a girlfriend, realize he wants to be an artist, and solve many of his co-residents' problems, including locating Egyptian music for his roommate, who won't get out of bed. What could he do if he wasn't depressed! But what's terrific about the book is Craig's voice--intimate, real, funny, ironic, and one kids will come closer to hear. Many readers will be familiar with the drugs, the sexual experimentation, the language, and, yes, the depression--or they'll know someone who is. This book offers hope in a package that readers will find enticing, and that's the gift it offers.

[The Kitchen House by Kathleen Grissom p.368 ISBN:978-1439153666](#)

Kathleen Grissom, *New York Times* bestselling author of the highly anticipated *Glory Over Everything*, established herself as a remarkable new talent with *The Kitchen House*, now a contemporary classic. In this gripping novel, a dark secret threatens to expose the best and worst in everyone tied to the estate at a thriving plantation in Virginia in the decades before the Civil War.

Orphaned during her passage from Ireland, young, white Lavinia arrives on the steps of the kitchen house and is placed, as an indentured servant, under the care of Belle, the master's illegitimate slave daughter. Lavinia learns to cook, clean, and serve food, while guided by the quiet strength and love of her new family. In time, Lavinia is accepted into the world of the big house, caring for the master's opium-addicted wife and befriending his dangerous yet protective son. She attempts to straddle the worlds of the kitchen and big house, but her skin color will forever set her apart from Belle and the other slaves. Through the unique eyes of Lavinia and Belle, Grissom's debut novel unfolds in a heartbreaking and ultimately hopeful story of class, race, dignity, deep-buried secrets, and familial bonds.

[The Japanese Lover by Isabel Allende p.336 ISBN:978-1501116971](#)

Named one of the most anticipated novels of the year by *New York Magazine*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *Entertainment Weekly*, *Cosmopolitan*, *Harper's Bazaar*, *Publishers Weekly*, *The Huffington Post*, and more. From *New York Times* and internationally bestselling author Isabel Allende, an exquisitely crafted love story and multigenerational epic that sweeps from San Francisco in the present-day to Poland and the United States during the Second World War. In 1939, as Poland falls under the shadow of the Nazis, young Alma Belasco's parents send her away to live in safety with an aunt and uncle in their opulent mansion in San Francisco. There, as the rest of the world goes to war, she encounters Ichimei Fukuda, the quiet and gentle son of the family's Japanese gardener. Unnoticed by those around them, a tender love affair begins to blossom. Following the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, the two are cruelly pulled apart as Ichimei and his family—like thousands of other Japanese Americans—are declared enemies and forcibly relocated to internment camps run by the United States government. Throughout their lifetimes, Alma and Ichimei reunite again and again, but theirs is a love that they are forever forced to hide from the world. Decades later, Alma is nearing the end of her long and eventful life. Irina Bazili, a care worker struggling to come to terms with her own troubled past, meets the elderly woman and her grandson, Seth, at San Francisco's charmingly eccentric Lark House nursing home. As Irina and Seth forge a friendship, they become intrigued by a series of mysterious gifts and letters sent to Alma, eventually learning about Ichimei and this extraordinary secret passion that has endured for nearly seventy years. Sweeping through time and spanning generations and continents, *The Japanese Lover* explores questions of identity, abandonment, redemption, and the unknowable impact of fate on our lives. Written with the same attention to historical detail and keen understanding of her characters that Isabel Allende has been known

for since her landmark first novel *The House of the Spirits*, *The Japanese Lover* is a profoundly moving tribute to the constancy of the human heart in a world of unceasing change.

The Last Bookaneer by Matthew Pearl p. 400 ISBN:978-0143108092

From the *New York Times*—bestselling author of the *Dante Club*, the story of an epic literary heist by a forgotten class of consummate criminals book'a-neer' (böök'ká-nēr'), *n.* a literary pirate; an individual capable of doing all that must be done in the universe of books that publishers, authors, and readers must not have a part in London, 1890—Pen Davenport is the most infamous bookaneer in Europe. A master of disguise, he makes his living stalking harbors, coffeehouses, and print shops for the latest manuscript to steal. But this golden age of publishing is on the verge of collapse. For a hundred years, loose copyright laws and a hungry reading public created a unique opportunity: books could easily be published abroad without an author's permission. Authors gained fame but suffered financially—Charles Dickens, Mark Twain, Robert Louis Stevenson, to name a few—but publishers reaped enormous profits while readers bought books inexpensively. Yet on the eve of the twentieth century, a new international treaty is signed to grind this literary underground to a sharp halt. The bookaneers are on the verge of extinction.

From the *New York Times*—bestselling author of *The Dante Club*, Matthew Pearl, *The Last Bookaneer* is the astonishing story of these literary thieves' epic final heist. On the island of Samoa, a dying Robert Louis Stevenson labors over a new novel. The thought of one last book from the great author fires the imaginations of the bookaneers, and soon Davenport sets out for the South Pacific accompanied by his assistant Fergins. But Davenport is hardly the only bookaneer with a mind to pirate Stevenson's last novel. His longtime adversary, the monstrous Belial, appears on the island, and soon Davenport, Fergins, and Belial find themselves embroiled in a conflict larger, perhaps, than literature itself. In *The Last Bookaneer*, Pearl crafts a finely wrought tale about a showdown between brilliant men in the last great act of their professions. It is nothing short of a page-turning journey to the heart of a lost era. Praise for *The Last Bookaneer*: "Matthew Pearl has a particular specialty: finding an obscure corner of 19th-century history and spinning from it literary fiction that is thought-provoking, enlightening, smoothly written — and a ripping good story to boot." —*The Seattle Times*

The Marriage of Opposites by Alice Hoffman p.400 ISBN:978-1451693607

"A luminous, Marquez-esque tale" (*O, The Oprah Magazine*) from the *New York Times* bestselling author of *The Museum of Extraordinary Things*: a forbidden love story set on a tropical island about the extraordinary woman who gave birth to painter Camille Pissarro—the Father of Impressionism. Growing up on idyllic St. Thomas in the early 1800s, Rachel dreams of life in faraway Paris. Rachel's mother, a pillar of their small refugee community of Jews who escaped the Inquisition, has never forgiven her daughter for being a difficult girl who refuses to live by the rules. Growing up, Rachel's salvation is their maid Adelle's belief in her strengths, and her deep, life-long friendship with Jestine, Adelle's daughter. But Rachel's life is not her own. She is married off to a widower with three children to save her father's business. When her older husband dies suddenly and his handsome, much younger nephew, Frédérick, arrives from France to settle the estate, Rachel seizes her own life story, beginning a defiant, passionate love affair that sparks a scandal that affects all of her family, including her favorite son, who will become one of the greatest artists of France. "A work of art" (*Dallas Morning News*), *The Marriage of Opposites* showcases the beloved, bestselling Alice Hoffman at the height of her considerable powers. "Her lush, seductive prose, and heart-pounding subject...make this latest skinny-dip in enchanted realism...the Platonic ideal of the beach read" (*Slate.com*). Once forgotten to history, the marriage of Rachel and Frédérick "will only renew your commitment to Hoffman's astonishing storytelling" (*USA TODAY*).

[Middlesex: A Novel by Jeffrey Eugenides p.544 ISBN:0978-0312427733](#)

(Morning Book Group selection in 2011)

"I was born twice: first, as a baby girl, on a remarkably smogless Detroit day in January of 1960; and then again, as a teenage boy, in an emergency room near Petoskey, Michigan, in August of 1974." And so begins *Middlesex*, the mesmerizing saga of a near-mythic Greek American family and the "roller-coaster ride of a single gene through time." The odd but utterly believable story of Cal Stephanides, and how this 41-year-old hermaphrodite was raised as Calliope, is at the tender heart of this long-awaited second novel from Jeffrey Eugenides, whose elegant and haunting 1993 debut, *The Virgin Suicides*, remains one of the finest first novels of recent memory. Eugenides weaves together a kaleidoscopic narrative spanning 80 years of a stained family history, from a fateful incestuous union in a small town in early 1920s Asia Minor to Prohibition-era Detroit; from the early days of Ford Motors to the heated 1967 race riots; from the tony suburbs of Grosse Pointe and a confusing, aching adolescent love story to modern-day Berlin. Eugenides's command of the narrative is astonishing. He balances Cal/Callie's shifting voices convincingly, spinning this strange and often unsettling story with intelligence, insight, and generous amounts of humor: Emotions, in my experience aren't covered by single words. I don't believe in "sadness," "joy," or "regret." ... I'd like to have at my disposal complicated hybrid emotions, Germanic traincar constructions like, say, "the happiness that attends disaster." Or: "the disappointment of sleeping with one's fantasy." ... I'd like to have a word for "the sadness inspired by failing restaurants" as well as for "the excitement of getting a room with a minibar." I've never had the right words to describe my life, and now that I've entered my story, I need them more than ever. When you get to the end of this splendorous book, when you suddenly realize that after hundreds of pages you have only a few more left to turn over, you'll experience a quick pang of regret knowing that your time with Cal is coming to a close, and you may even resist finishing it--putting it aside for an hour or two, or maybe overnight--just so that this wondrous, magical novel might never end

[Mrs. Poe by Lynn Cullen p.352 ISBN: 978-1476702926](#)

Inspired by literature's most haunting love triangle, award-winning author Lynn Cullen delivers a pitch-perfect rendering of Edgar Allan Poe, his mistress's tantalizing confession, and his wife's frightening obsession in this new masterpiece of historical fiction to which Sara Gruen says, "*Mrs. Poe* had my heart racing...Don't miss it!" 1845: New York City is a sprawling warren of gaslit streets and crowded avenues, bustling with new immigrants and old money, optimism and opportunity, poverty and crime. Edgar Allan Poe's "The Raven" is all the rage—the success of which a struggling poet like Frances Osgood can only dream. As a mother trying to support two young children after her husband's cruel betrayal, Frances jumps at the chance to meet the illustrious Mr. Poe at a small literary gathering, if only to help her fledgling career. Although not a great fan of Poe's writing, she is nonetheless overwhelmed by his magnetic presence—and the surprising revelation that he admires *her* work. What follows is a flirtation, then a seduction, then an illicit affair...and with each clandestine encounter, Frances finds herself falling slowly and inexorably under the spell of her mysterious, complicated lover. But when Edgar's frail wife, Virginia, insists on befriending Frances as well, the relationship becomes as dark and twisted as one of Poe's tales. And like those gothic heroines whose fates are forever sealed, Frances begins to fear that deceiving Mrs. Poe may be as impossible as cheating death itself...

[Neverhome by Laird Hunt p.272 ISBN:978-0316370165](#)

A New York Times Book Review Editor's Choice: "A brilliant and breathtaking blaze of a novel" -- Clare Clark Guardian "A spare, beautiful novel, so deeply about America and the language of America that its sentences seem to rise up from the earth itself. Laird Hunt had me under his spell from the first word of

Neverhome to the last. Magnificent" -- Paul Auster "Neverhome is a wondrous feat. Few novels written in English approach its linguistic verve" -- Eileen Battersby Irish Times "The Civil War has given us so many great literary works that I couldn't have imagined a new fictional approach that was both stunningly original and yet utterly natural, even inevitable. But this is just what Laird Hunt brilliantly delivers in his new novel. The key is his central character: in her voice, her personality, her yearning, she deeply touches our shared and enduring humanity. Neverhome is masterful work by one of our finest writers" -- Robert Olen Butler, author of A Good Scent from a Strange Mountain "With nothing but the simple language of well-worn words, Mr Hunt has conjured up a wholly original heroine with an utterly fresh voice... A book that deserves a wider readership." The Economist Inaugural winner of the Grand Prix de la Littérature Américaine She calls herself Ash, but that's not her real name. She is a farmer's faithful wife, but she has left her husband to don the uniform of a Union soldier in the Civil War. NEVERHOME tells the harrowing story of Ash Thompson during the battle for the South. Through bloodshed and hysteria and heartbreak, she becomes a hero, a folk legend, a madwoman and a traitor to the American cause. Laird Hunt's dazzling new novel throws a light on the adventurous women who chose to fight instead of stay behind. It is also a mystery story: why did Ash leave and her husband stay? Why can she not return? What will she have to go through to make it back home? In gorgeous prose, Hunt's rebellious young heroine fights her way through history, and back home to her husband, and finally into our hearts.

[The Nightingale by Kristin Hannah p.440 ISBN:978-0312577223](#)

In love we find out who we want to be. In war we find out who we are. FRANCE, 1939 In the quiet village of Carriveau, Vianne Mauriac says goodbye to her husband, Antoine, as he heads for the Front. She doesn't believe that the Nazis will invade France ... but invade they do, in droves of marching soldiers, in caravans of trucks and tanks, in planes that fill the skies and drop bombs upon the innocent. When a German captain requisitions Vianne's home, she and her daughter must live with the enemy or lose everything. Without food or money or hope, as danger escalates all around them, she is forced to make one impossible choice after another to keep her family alive. Vianne's sister, Isabelle, is a rebellious eighteen-year-old girl, searching for purpose with all the reckless passion of youth. While thousands of Parisians march into the unknown terrors of war, she meets G  tan, a partisan who believes the French can fight the Nazis from within France, and she falls in love as only the young can ... completely. But when he betrays her, Isabelle joins the Resistance and never looks back, risking her life time and again to save others. With courage, grace and powerful insight, bestselling author Kristin Hannah captures the epic panorama of WWII and illuminates an intimate part of history seldom seen: the women's war. The Nightingale tells the stories of two sisters, separated by years and experience, by ideals, passion and circumstance, each embarking on her own dangerous path toward survival, love, and freedom in German-occupied, war-torn France--a heartbreakingly beautiful novel that celebrates the resilience of the human spirit and the durability of women. It is a novel for everyone, a novel for a lifetime.

[One Good Turn by Kate Atkinson p.418 ISBN:978-0316012829](#)

"Atkinson's bright voice rings on every page, and her sly and wry observations move the plot as swiftly as suspense turns the pages of a thriller."-San Francisco Chronicle Two years after the events of Case Histories left him a retired millionaire, Jackson Brodie has followed Julia, his occasional girlfriend and former client, to Edinburgh for its famous summer arts festival. But when he witnesses a man being brutally attacked in a traffic jam - the apparent victim of an extreme case of road rage - a chain of events is set in motion that will pull the wife of an unscrupulous real estate tycoon, a timid but successful crime novelist, and a hardheaded female police detective into Jackson's orbit. Suddenly out of retirement, Jackson is once again in the midst of several mysteries that intersect in one giant and sinister scheme. "Compelling and always entertaining." -USA Today

[The Orchardist: A novel by Amanda Coplin p.448 ISBN: 978-0062188519](#)

At once intimate and epic, *The Orchardist* is historical fiction at its best, in the grand literary tradition of William Faulkner, Marilynne Robinson, Michael Ondaatje, Annie Proulx, and Toni Morrison. In her stunningly original and haunting debut novel, Amanda Coplin evokes a powerful sense of place, mixing tenderness and violence as she spins an engrossing tale of a solitary orchardist who provides shelter to two runaway teenage girls in the untamed American West, and the dramatic consequences of his actions.

[The Other Typist by Suzanne Rindell p.368 ISBN:978-0425268421](#)

A *KIRKUS REVIEWS* BEST BOOK OF THE YEAR! A haunting debut novel set against the background of New York City in the 1920s... "From the first page [I] was absorbed...Suzanne Rindell's story of a 1920s police stenographer who becomes increasingly obsessed with a glamorous new typist reminds me at points of *Notes on a Scandal* and Patricia Highsmith, but has creepy charms all its own."--*The Paris Review* Confessions are Rose Baker's job. A typist for the New York City Police Department, she sits in judgment like a high priestess. Criminals come before her to admit their transgressions, and, with a few strokes of the keys before her, she seals their fate. But while she may hear about shootings, knifings, and crimes of passion, as soon as she leaves the room, she reverts to a dignified and proper lady. Until Odalie joins the typing pool. As Rose quickly falls under the stylish, coquettish Odalie's spell, she is lured into a sparkling underworld of speakeasies and jazz. And what starts as simple fascination turns into an obsession from which she may never recover.

[The Perfume Collector by Kathleen Tessaro p. 464 ISBN:978-006225740](#)

A remarkable novel about secrets, desire, memory, passion, and possibility. Newlywed Grace Monroe doesn't fit anyone's expectations of a successful 1950s London socialite, least of all her own. When she receives an unexpected inheritance from a complete stranger, Madame Eva d'Orsey, Grace is drawn to uncover the identity of her mysterious benefactor. Weaving through the decades, from 1920s New York to Monte Carlo, Paris, and London, the story Grace uncovers is that of an extraordinary woman who inspired one of Paris's greatest perfumers. Immortalized in three evocative perfumes, Eva d'Orsey's history will transform Grace's life forever, forcing her to choose between the woman she is expected to be and the person she really is. *The Perfume Collector* explores the complex and obsessive love between muse and artist, and the tremendous power of memory and scent.

[A Single Thread by Marie Bostwick p.344 ISBN:978-1607513056](#)

Marie Bostwick weaves the unforgettable story of four very different women whose paths cross, changing their lives forever . . . It's a long way from Fort Worth, Texas, to New Bern, Connecticut, yet it only takes a day in the charming Yankee town to make Evelyn Dixon realize she's found her new home. The abrupt end of her marriage was Evelyn's wake-up call to get busy chasing her dream of opening a quilt shop. Finding a storefront is easy enough; starting a new life isn't. Little does Evelyn imagine it will bring a trio like Abigail Burgess, her niece Liza, and Margot Matthews through her door . . . Troubled and angry after her mother's death, Liza threatens to embarrass her Aunt Abigail all over town unless she joins her for quilting classes. A victim of downsizing at the peak of her career, Margot hopes an event hosted by the quilt shop could be a great chance to network-and keep from dying of boredom . . . As they stitch their unique creations, Evelyn, Abigail, Liza, and Margot form a sisterhood they never sought-but one that they'll be grateful for when the unexpected provides a poignant reminder of the single thread that binds us all . . . Praise for the Novels of Marie Bostwick Fields of Gold "A touching story"-Patricia Gaffney

"Gripping, heartwarming"-Dorothy Garlock On Wings of the Morning "Will set your heart to soaring"
-Debbie Macomber

Snow Falling on Cedars by David Guterson p.460 ISBN:978-0679764021

This is the kind of book where you can smell and hear and see the fictional world the writer has created, so palpably does the atmosphere come through. Set on an island in the straits north of Puget Sound, in Washington, where everyone is either a fisherman or a berry farmer, the story is nominally about a murder trial. But since it's set in the 1950s, lingering memories of World War II, internment camps and racism helps fuel suspicion of a Japanese-American fisherman, a lifelong resident of the islands. It's a great story, but the primary pleasure of the book is Guterson's renderings of the people and the place.

The Summer Before the War by Helen Simonson p. 496

ISBN:978-0812993103

The bestselling author of *Major Pettigrew's Last Stand* returns with a breathtaking novel of love on the eve of World War I that reaches far beyond the small English town in which it is set. East Sussex, 1914. It is the end of England's brief Edwardian summer, and everyone agrees that the weather has never been so beautiful. Hugh Grange, down from his medical studies, is visiting his Aunt Agatha, who lives with her husband in the small, idyllic coastal town of Rye. Agatha's husband works in the Foreign Office, and she is certain he will ensure that the recent saber rattling over the Balkans won't come to anything. And Agatha has more immediate concerns; she has just risked her carefully built reputation by pushing for the appointment of a woman to replace the Latin master. When Beatrice Nash arrives with one trunk and several large crates of books, it is clear she is significantly more freethinking—and attractive—than anyone believes a Latin teacher should be. For her part, mourning the death of her beloved father, who has left her penniless, Beatrice simply wants to be left alone to pursue her teaching and writing. But just as Beatrice comes alive to the beauty of the Sussex landscape and the colorful characters who populate Rye, the perfect summer is about to end. For despite Agatha's reassurances, the unimaginable is coming. Soon the limits of progress, and the old ways, will be tested as this small Sussex town and its inhabitants go to war.

The Tiger's Wife by Tea Obreht p. 368 ISBN:978-0385343848

NATIONAL BOOK AWARD FINALIST • NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER. NAMED ONE OF THE BEST BOOKS OF THE YEAR BY *The Wall Street Journal* • *O: The Oprah Magazine* • *The Economist* • *Vogue* • *Slate* • *Chicago Tribune* • *The Seattle Times* • *Dayton Daily News* • *Publishers Weekly* • Alan Cheuse, NPR's *All Things Considered*. ELECTED ONE OF THE TOP 10 BOOKS OF THE YEAR BY Michiko Kakutani, *The New York Times* In a Balkan country mending from war, Natalia, a young doctor, is compelled to unravel the mysterious circumstances surrounding her beloved grandfather's recent death. Searching for clues, she turns to his worn copy of *The Jungle Book* and the stories he told her of his encounters over the years with "the deathless man." But most extraordinary of all is the story her grandfather never told her—the legend of the tiger's wife.

The Tin Drum by Günter Grass p.600 ISBN:978-0547339108

"It is fair to call this arguably the most important German novel of the post-war era." -The Observer "Grass published his milestone of postwar literature 50 years ago, *The Tin Drum*, one of the great novels of the twentieth century, was published in Ralph Manheim's outstanding translation in 1959. It became a runaway bestseller and catapulted its young author to the forefront of world literature. After more than fifty years, *The Tin Drum* has, if anything, gained in power and relevance. All of Grass's amazing evocations

are still there, and still amazing: Oskar Matzerath, the indomitable drummer; his grandmother, Anna Koljaiczek; his mother, Agnes; Alfred Matzerath and Jan Bronski, his presumptive fathers. And Oskar's midget friends—Bebra, the great circus master, and Roswitha Raguna, the famous somnambulist; Sister Scholastica and Sister Agatha, the Right Reverend Father Wiehnke, the Greffs, the Schefflers, Herr Fajngold, all Kashubians, Poles, Germans, and Jews—waiting to be discovered and rediscovered.

[The Traitor's Wife by Allison Pataki p.496 ISBN:978-1476738604](#)

A riveting historical novel about Peggy Shippen Arnold, the cunning wife of Benedict Arnold and mastermind behind America's most infamous act of treason... Everyone knows Benedict Arnold—the Revolutionary War general who betrayed America and fled to the British—as history's most notorious turncoat. Many know Arnold's co-conspirator, Major John André, who was apprehended with Arnold's documents in his boots and hanged at the orders of General George Washington. But few know of the integral third character in the plot: a charming young woman who not only contributed to the betrayal but orchestrated it. Socialite Peggy Shippen is half Benedict Arnold's age when she seduces the war hero during his stint as military commander of Philadelphia. Blinded by his young bride's beauty and wit, Arnold does not realize that she harbors a secret: loyalty to the British. Nor does he know that she hides a past romance with the handsome British spy John André. Peggy watches as her husband, crippled from battle wounds and in debt from years of service to the colonies, grows ever more disillusioned with his hero, Washington, and the American cause. Together with her former love and her disaffected husband, Peggy hatches the plot to deliver West Point to the British and, in exchange, win fame and fortune for herself and Arnold. Told from the perspective of Peggy's maid, whose faith in the new nation inspires her to intervene in her mistress's affairs even when it could cost her everything, *The Traitor's Wife* brings these infamous figures to life, illuminating the sordid details and the love triangle that nearly destroyed the American fight for freedom.

[Twain's End by Lynn Cullen p.368 ISBN:978-1476758978](#)

From the bestselling and highly acclaimed author of the “page-turning tale” (*Library Journal*, starred review) *Mrs. Poe* comes a fictionalized imagining of the personal life of America's most iconic writer: Mark Twain. In March of 1909, Mark Twain cheerfully blessed the wedding of his private secretary, Isabel V. Lyon, and his business manager, Ralph Ashcroft. One month later, he fired both. He proceeded to write a ferocious 429-page rant about the pair, calling Isabel “a liar, a forger, a thief, a hypocrite, a drunkard, a sneak, a humbug, a traitor, a conspirator, a filthy-minded and salacious slut pining for seduction.” Twain and his daughter, Clara Clemens, then slandered Isabel in the newspapers, erasing her nearly seven years of devoted service to their family. How did Lyon go from being the beloved secretary who ran Twain's life to a woman he was determined to destroy? In *Twain's End*, Lynn Cullen “cleverly spins a mysterious, dark tale” (*Booklist*) about the tangled relationships between Twain, Lyon, and Ashcroft, as well as the little-known love triangle between Helen Keller, her teacher Anne Sullivan Macy, and Anne's husband, John Macy, which comes to light during their visit to Twain's Connecticut home in 1909. Add to the party a furious Clara Clemens, smarting from her own failed love affair, and carefully kept veneers shatter. Based on Isabel Lyon's extant diary, Twain's writings, letters, photographs, and events in Twain's boyhood that may have altered his ability to love, *Twain's End* triumphs as “a tender evocation of a vain, complicated man's twilight years and a last chance at love” (*People*).

[The Vacationers by Emma Straub p.320 ISBN:978-1594633881](#)

An irresistible, deftly observed novel from the *New York Times*-bestselling author of *Modern Lovers*—about the secrets, joys, and jealousies that rise to the surface over the course of an American family's two-week stay in Mallorca. For the Posts, a two-week trip to the Balearic island of Mallorca with their extended family and friends is a celebration: Franny and Jim are observing their thirty-fifth wedding anniversary, and their daughter, Sylvia, has graduated from high school. The sunlit island, its mountains and beaches, its tapas and tennis courts, also promise an escape from the tensions simmering at home in Manhattan. But all does not go according to plan: over the course of the vacation, secrets come to light, old and new humiliations are experienced, childhood rivalries resurface, and ancient wounds are exacerbated. This is a story of the sides of ourselves that we choose to show and those we try to conceal, of the ways we tear each other down and build each other up again, and the bonds that ultimately hold us together. With wry humor and tremendous heart, Emma Straub delivers a richly satisfying story of a family in the midst of a maelstrom of change, emerging irrevocably altered yet whole.

[Vanessa and Her Sister: A Novel by Priya Parmar p. 384](#)

[ISBN:978-0804176392](#)

A *New York Times* Notable Book • An *Entertainment Weekly* “Must List” Pick • “Prepare to be dazzled.”—Paula McLain • “Quite simply astonishing.”—Sarah Blake What if Virginia Woolf’s sister had kept a diary? For fans of *The Paris Wife* and *Loving Frank* comes a spellbinding new story of the inseparable bond between Virginia and her sister, the gifted painter Vanessa Bell, and the real-life betrayal that threatened to destroy their family. Hailed by *The New York Times Book Review* as “an uncanny success” and based on meticulous research, this stunning novel illuminates a little-known episode in the celebrated sisters’ glittering bohemian youth among the legendary Bloomsbury Group. *Find your next book club pick, read special features, and more. Join the Random House Reader’s Circle.* London, 1905: The city is alight with change, and the Stephen siblings are at the forefront. Vanessa, Virginia, Thoby, and Adrian are leaving behind their childhood home and taking a house in the leafy heart of avant-garde Bloomsbury. There they bring together a glittering circle of bright, outrageous artistic friends who will grow into legend and come to be known as the Bloomsbury Group. And at the center of this charmed circle are the devoted, gifted sisters: Vanessa, the painter, and Virginia, the writer. Each member of the group will go on to earn fame and success, but so far Vanessa Bell has never sold a painting. Virginia Woolf’s book review has just been turned down by *The Times*. Lytton Strachey has not published anything. E. M. Forster has finished his first novel but does not like the title. Leonard Woolf is still a civil servant in Ceylon, and John Maynard Keynes is looking for a job. Together, this sparkling coterie of artists and intellectuals throw away convention and embrace the wild freedom of being young, single bohemians in London. But the landscape shifts when Vanessa unexpectedly falls in love and her sister feels dangerously abandoned. Eerily possessive, charismatic, manipulative, and brilliant, Virginia has always lived in the shelter of Vanessa’s constant attention and encouragement. Without it, she careens toward self-destruction and madness. As tragedy and betrayal threaten to destroy the family, Vanessa must decide if it is finally time to protect her own happiness above all else. The work of exciting young newcomer Priya Parmar, *Vanessa and Her Sister* exquisitely captures the champagne-heady days of prewar London and the extraordinary lives of sisters Vanessa Bell and Virginia Woolf.

[We Never Asked for Wings: A Novel by Vanessa Diffenbaugh p. 336](#)

[ISBN:978-0553392333](#)

From the beloved *New York Times* bestselling author of *The Language of Flowers* comes her much-anticipated new novel about young love, hard choices, and hope against all odds. For fourteen years, Letty Espinosa has worked three jobs around San Francisco to make ends meet while her mother

raised her children—Alex, fifteen, and Luna, just six—in their tiny apartment on a forgotten spit of wetlands near the bay. But now Letty's parents are returning to Mexico, and Letty must step up and become a mother for the first time in her life. Navigating this new terrain is challenging for Letty, especially as Luna desperately misses her grandparents and Alex, who is falling in love with a classmate, is unwilling to give his mother a chance. Letty comes up with a plan to help the family escape the dangerous neighborhood and heartbreaking injustice that have marked their lives, but one wrong move could jeopardize everything she's worked for and her family's fragile hopes for the future. Vanessa Diffenbaugh blends gorgeous prose with compelling themes of motherhood, undocumented immigration, and the American Dream in a powerful and prescient story about family.

BOOKS NOT AVAILABLE IN NEW HAMPSHIRE LIBRARY SYSTEM:

Georgia O'Keeffe: A Life by Roxana Robinson p. 679 ISBN: 978-0874519068

Georgia O'Keeffe is arguably the 20th century's leading woman artist. Coming of age along with American modernism, her life was rich in intense relationships -- with family, friends, and especially noted photographer Alfred Stieglitz. Her struggle between the rigorous demands of love and work resulted in extraordinary accomplishments. Her often-eroticized flowers, bones, stones, skulls, and pelvises became extremely well known to a broad American public. The New York Times Book Review named this richly detailed and moving biography a Notable Book of the Year.

Illegit: A Memoir of Family Intrigue, Wealth, and Cruel Indifference by George A. DeMoulas p. 108 ISBN:978-1496933317

Finding My Identity My story of how DNA proved my legacy My life story - The journey that led me to prove my legacy through DNA analysis. Everyone has a story. It takes courage to tell it. By writing this book I hope I can help one of many survive what I lived by telling my own experiences. I hope to help others realize they do have an identity and they need to be responsible for it.

Nobody Said Not to Go: The Life, Loves and Adventures of Emily Hahn by Ken Cuthbertson p.400 ISBN:9780571199655

By all accounts, Emily Hahn (1905-97) should be a household name. A trailblazer, she routinely defied convention and chronicled her singular experiences in hundreds of articles for the *New Yorker* and in more than 50 books. Cuthbertson, who met Hahn while working on his biography of John Gunther, speculates that she was just too controversial, versatile, and complicated for fame then, but not now. He adroitly brings her back into the limelight by detailing her achievements--she was the first woman at her university to earn a degree in mining engineering, she drove cross-country during the risky 1920s, then lived by her wits in colonial Africa and war-torn China, mining not the earth but her involvements with other cultures, men, and every conceivable form of entertainment, work, and danger. The events that Hahn witnessed were world-changing, and her blazing candor about war, race, sex, and feminism was courageous; but she was too hot to handle, and even though she wrote for the *New Yorker* well into her eighties, she dropped from sight. Thanks to Cuthbertson, Hahn has an encore in front of an audience hungry for just her kind of story.

Stuart: A Life Backwards by Alexander Masters p.320 ISBN: 978-0385340885

The British antihero of this moving biography started with teenage glue-sniffing, petty thievery and gang brawls, then graduated to heroin and major thievery. He endured prison stints and led a "medieval existence" on the streets, finally emerging into triumphant semistability as an "ex-homeless, ex-junkie psychopath" with only occasional episodes of violence and suicidal impulses. In Cambridge, England, Masters, an advocate for the homeless, befriended Stuart—someone for whom "cause and effect are not connected in the usual way"—and found him at times obnoxious and repellent, but also funny and honest. Masters notes bad genes and childhood sexual molestation, and critiques "the System" of British welfare and criminal justice institutions that help with one hand and brutalize with the other, but he doesn't reduce Stuart's intractable problems to simple dysfunction or societal neglect. By eschewing easy answers (the easy answers—don't drink, don't use, don't steal, don't play with knives—are precisely the hardest for Stuart), he accords full humanity to Stuart's stumbling efforts to grapple with his demons. Hilarious and clear-eyed, the author's superbly drawn portrait of Stuart is an unforgettable literary evocation and a small masterpiece of moral empathy and imagination.

Whistling Vivaldi: How Stereotypes Affect Us and What We Can Do by Claude M. Steele p.256 ISBN:978-0393339727

The acclaimed social psychologist offers an insider's look at his research and groundbreaking findings on stereotypes and identity. Claude M. Steele, who has been called "one of the few great social psychologists," offers a vivid first-person account of the research that supports his groundbreaking conclusions on stereotypes and identity. He sheds new light on American social phenomena from racial and gender gaps in test scores to the belief in the superior athletic prowess of black men, and lays out a plan for mitigating these "stereotype threats" and reshaping American identities.

Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria? And Other Conversations About Race by Beverly Daniel Tatum ISBN: 294 ISBN:978-0465083619

This insightful exploration of the varieties of Americans' experience with race and racism in everyday life would be an excellent starting point for the upcoming national conversations on race that President Clinton and his appointed commission will be conducting this fall. Tatum, a developmental psychologist (Mt. Holyoke Coll.) with a special interest in the emerging field of racial-identity development, is a consultant to school systems and community groups on teaching and learning in a multicultural context. Not only has she studied the distinctive social dynamics faced by black youth educated in predominantly white environments, but since 1980, Tatum has developed a course on the psychology of racism and taught it in a variety of university settings. She is also a black woman and a concerned mother of two, and she draws on all these experiences and bases of knowledge to write a remarkably jargon-free book that is as rigorously analytical as it is refreshingly practical and drives its points home with a range of telling anecdotes. Tatum illuminates "why talking about racism is so hard" and what we can do to make it easier, leaving her readers more confident about facing the difficult terrain on the road to a genuinely color-blind society.

Cousin Joseph by Jules Feiffer p.128 ISBN: 978-1637190651

Meet Big Sam Hannigan. Tough, righteous, a man on a mission. Only problem is, it's the wrong mission. With the *New York Times* bestseller *Kill My Mother*, legendary cartoonist Jules Feiffer began an epic saga of American noir fiction. With *Cousin Joseph*, a prequel that introduces us to bare-knuckled Detective Sam Hannigan, head of the Bay City's Red Squad and patriarch of the Hannigan family featured in *Kill My Mother*, Feiffer brings us the second installment in this highly anticipated graphic trilogy. Our story opens in Bay City in 1931 in the midst of the Great Depression. Big Sam sees himself as a righteous, truth-seeking patriot, defending the American way, as his Irish immigrant father would have wanted, against a rising tide of left-wing unionism, strikes, and disruption that plague his home town. At the same time he makes monthly, secret overnight trips on behalf of Cousin Joseph, a mysterious man on the phone he has never laid eyes on, to pay off Hollywood producers to ensure that they will film only upbeat films that idealize a mythic America: no warts, no injustice uncorrected, only happy endings. But Sam, himself, is not in for a happy ending, as step by step the secret of his unseen mentor's duplicity is revealed to him. Fast-moving action, violence, and murder in the noir style of pulps and forties films are melded in the satiric, sociopolitical Feifferian style to dig up the buried fearmongering of the past and expose how closely it matches the headlines, happenings, and violence of today. With *Cousin Joseph*, Feiffer builds on his late-life conversion to cinematic noir, bowing, as ever, to youthful heroes Will Eisner and Milton Caniff, but ultimately creating a masterpiece that through his unique perspective and comic-strip noir style illuminates the very origins of Hollywood and its role in creating the bipolar nation we've become.

[The Fisherman: A Novel by Chigozie Obioma p.304](#)

[ISBN:978-0316338356](#)

Told by nine-year-old Benjamin, the youngest of four brothers, *THE FISHERMEN* is the Cain and Abel-esque story of a childhood in Nigeria, in the small town of Akure. When their father has to travel to a distant city for work, the brothers take advantage of his absence to skip school and go fishing. At the forbidden nearby river, they meet a madman who persuades the oldest of the boys that he is destined to be killed by one of his siblings. What happens next is an almost mythic event whose impact—both tragic and redemptive—will transcend the lives and imaginations of the book's characters and readers. Dazzling and viscerally powerful, *THE FISHERMEN* is an essential novel about Africa, seen through the prism of one family's destiny.

[The Honeymoon by Dinitia Smith p. 432 ISBN:978-1590517789](#)

Dinitia Smith's spellbinding novel recounts George Eliot's honeymoon in Venice in June 1880 following her marriage to a handsome young man twenty years her junior. When she agreed to marry John Walter Cross, Eliot was recovering from the death of George Henry Lewes, her beloved companion of twenty-six years. Eliot was bereft: left at the age of sixty to contemplate profound questions about her physical decline, her fading appeal, and the prospect of loneliness. In her youth, Mary Ann Evans—who would later be known as George Eliot—was a country girl, considered too plain to marry, so she educated herself in order to secure a livelihood. In an era when female novelists were objects of wonder, she became the most famous writer of her day—with a male nom de plume. *The Honeymoon* explores different kinds of love, and of the possibilities of redemption and happiness even in an imperfect union. Smith integrates historical truth with her own rich rendition of Eliot's inner voice, crafting a page-turner that is as intelligent as it is gripping.

[Revolutionary by Alex Myers p.320 ISBN:978-1451663341](#)

"A remarkable novel" (*The New York Times*) about America's first female soldier, Deborah Sampson Gannett, who ran away from home in 1782, successfully disguised herself as a man, and fought valiantly in the Revolutionary War. At a time when rigid societal norms seemed absolute, Deborah Sampson risked everything in search of something better. *Revolutionary*, Alex Myers's richly imagined and carefully researched debut novel, tells the story of a fierce-tempered young woman turned celebrated soldier and the remarkable courage, hope, fear, and heartbreak that shaped her odyssey during the birth of a nation. After years of indentured servitude in a sleepy Massachusetts town, Deborah chafes under the oppression of colonial society and cannot always hide her discontent. When a sudden crisis forces her hand, she decides to escape the only way she can, rejecting her place in the community in favor of the perilous unknown. Cutting her hair, binding her chest, and donning men's clothes stolen from a neighbor, Deborah sheds her name and her home, beginning her identity-shaking transformation into the imaginary "Robert Shurtliff"—a desperate and dangerous masquerade that grows more serious when "Robert" joins the Continental Army. What follows is a journey through America's War of Independence like no other—an unlikely march through cold winters across bloody battlefields, the nightmare of combat and the cruelty of betrayal, the elation of true love and the tragedy of heartbreak. As *The Boston Globe* raves, "*Revolutionary* succeeds on a number of levels, as a great historical-military adventure story, as an exploration of gender identity, and as a page-turning description of the fascinating life of the revolutionary Deborah Sampson."

[The UnAmericans by Molly Antopol p.288 ISBN:978-0393349962](#)

Longlisted for the National Book Award * A stunning exploration of characters shaped by the forces of history, the debut work of fiction by a 2013 National Book Foundation "5 Under 35"

Honoree. An absentee father, a former dissident from communist-era Prague, needles his adult daughter for details about her newly commissioned play when he fears it will cast him in an unflattering light. An actor, imprisoned during the Red Scare for playing up his communist leanings to get a part with a leftist film director, is shamed by his act when he reunites with his precocious young son. An Israeli soldier, forced to defend a settlement filled with American religious families, still pines for a chance to discover the United States for himself. A young Israeli journalist, left unemployed after America's most recent economic crash, questions her life path when she begins dating a middle-aged widower still in mourning for his wife. And in the book's final story, a tour de force spanning three continents and three generations of women, a young American and her Israeli husband are forced to reconsider their marriage after the death of her dissident art-collecting grandmother. Again and again, Molly Antopol's deeply sympathetic characters struggle for footing in an uncertain world, hounded by forces beyond their control. Their voices are intimate and powerful and they resonate with searing beauty. Antopol is a superb young talent, and *The UnAmericans* will long be remembered for its wit, humanity, and heart.

[While I Was Gone by Sue Miller p.304 ISBN:978-0345443281](#)

Jo Becker has every reason to be content. She has three dynamic daughters, a loving marriage, and a rewarding career. But she feels a sense of unease. Then an old housemate reappears, sending Jo back to a distant past when she lived in a communal house in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Drawn deeper into her memories of that fateful summer in 1968, Jo begins to obsess about the person she once was. As she is pulled farther from her present life, her husband, and her world, Jo struggles against becoming enveloped by her past and its dark secret.