

Sarah's books read in 2019

["reading for endings"](#) is the wrap-up

see also [books read in 2018](#) and ["reading when you are crumbling"](#) for the wrap-up

see also [books read in 2017](#) and ["reading when the world crumbles"](#) for the wrap-up


see also [books read in 2016](#) and ["books won't save you"](#) for the 2016 wrap-up

see also [books read in 2015](#) and ["books with friends"](#) for my 2015 year in review




see also [books read in 2014](#) and ["being a reader, again and still,"](#) the 2014 year in review

color key: **dark magenta** is reread; **orange** are books in paper instead of kindle; **green** are books I'm currently reading; and **red** are books I loved and/or really stuck with me, which is not the same thing; the text in quotes is from my original #cursorybookreviews on instagram and most of the other comments are from the end of the year recollections because that's how I ran in 2019

58 books so far..... (12/30)

: borrowed from the library = 27

January

1. **Madeline Miller, *Circe*** (ohhhh so good; there were a few slow moments, but it was great--I love retellings but this also felt more healing than that; maybe because i'm in such a crappy place?)
2. **Sara Gran, *Claire deWitt and the City of the Dead*** (no idea where I heard the rec for this series, NYT maybe?, but I loved this book--the mixture of the hard-boiled detective and the New Orleans love and oh, the heart-breaking young men in it; looking forward to more) 
3. **Michael Connelly, *The Late Show*** (Rene Ballard #1 "Perfectly fine, I guess. I read it mostly because she shows up in the most recent Bosch") 
4. **George Pelecanos, *The Man Who Came Uptown*** ("mostly enjoyable [bonus points for librarians, libraries, reading, DC, Potomac, and the belief that you can change your life]") 
5. **Thomas Perry, *Vanishing Act*** (Jane Whitfield #1 "Shifts direction partway through and gets even better")
6. **Kat Howard, *Cathedral of Myth and Bones*** (short stories; I am always slow at reading story collections and tbh while I like this, it's December now and I still haven't finished it)

February

7. **Denise Mina, *Field of Blood*** ("Not my favorite but still good; the first of the Paddy Meehan & great early 80s newspaper stuff")
8. **Denise Mina, *The Dead Hour*** ("Now we're getting somewhere! <3 Paddy and the paper; she needs to stop worrying about being fat tho")

9. Denise Mina, *Slip of the Knife* ("Not great like her first trilogy, but enjoyable enough. (And no offensive creepy violence against women which is a big plus oy vey)")
10. Hannah Capin, *The Dead Queens Club* ("Eh, not as awesome as it should've been.")
11. Megan Abbott, *Give Me Your Hand* ("Eh. Wasn't feeling it") 📖
12. Sara Gran, *Claire DeWitt and the Bohemian Highway* (#2 "V good but Claire is falling apart and it's making me sad!") 📖

March

13. Sandra Newman, *The Heavens* ("Not easy emotionally, but super absorbing and, for once, a fictional Shakespeare didn't make me scream")
14. C. J. Sansom, *Tombland* (Shardlake #7 "too. much. history. and not enough murder solving"--I usually love these books and would still recommend the series, but this one read like he'd done a ton of research into the siege and then felt like he had to cram it all in)

April

15. Sara Gran, *The Infinite Blacktop* (#3 "Claire is pulling herself together! This is so much more complicated than the others and also still v good") 📖
16. Sally Rooney, *Conversations with Friends* ("I don't know why exactly this was so compelling but it was"; it's funny--I don't deny the accuracy of this, but actually, trying to recall this from the viewpoint of December, it's hard to remember a lot about it; this is the one about the two women and the older couple they take up with and.... I don't know? I had this in red but now I'm doubting that) 📖
17. Ann Leckie, *The Raven Tower* ("It took me a gazillion years to finish this." what a fucking shame, since I loved the first four books she wrote)

May

18. Matt Goldman, *Broken Ice* (Nils Shapiro #2 "Still here for Nils Shapiro even if the mystery itself is a bit meh")
19. Alyssa Cole, *A Princess in Theory* (Reluctant Royals #1 "fun!") 📖
20. Alyssa Cole, *Duke by Default* (RR #2 "Still good, though it reminded me that I don't read romance novels because they make me cry")
21. Thomas Perry, *Dance for the Dead* (Jane Whitfield #2 "Exactly fine")
22. Jane Harper, *The Lost Man* ("devoured [I've loved all three of hers]"; for real, if you like mysteries, she is great; this one will give you some outback along with thinking about masculinity) 📖

June

23. Elizabeth McCracken, *Bowlaway* ("Meh!") 📖
24. Ben H. Winters, *Golden State* ("I did not love this even though I thought I would and I'm not sure why") 📖
25. Flynn Berry, *A Double Life* ("Eh, it was not as bad as some murder mysteries I've read"; pretty much forgot this as soon as I read it, much like her first one) 📖

July

26. Leah Hager Cohen, *Strangers and Cousins* (“Very good! But oh did it trigger my family emotions so I wept through the end. ymmv”)
27. Jodi Taylor, *Just One Damned Thing After Another: The Chronicles of St Mary’s* (“Kinda tedious, actually”)
28. Matt Goldman, *The Shallows* (Nils Shapiro #3 “Yep.” --the “yep” in this case is a positive endorsement, aka, still here for Nils Shapiro and Matt Goldman)
29. Kate Atkinson, *Big Sky* (“A disappointed meh. I liked past Jackson Brodies so much! I like a lot of what’s going on here. But the tone and internal voices made me batty.”)
30. Karen Thompson Walker, *The Dreamers* (“Doesn’t actually do anything.”) 📖
31. Alyssa Cole, *A Prince on Paper* (Reluctant Royals #3 “If you like romances (or might) the whole series is great. On the other hand, if it’s the 20th anniversary of your marriage to the person you’re divorcing, you probably want to give any romances a wide berth.”) 📖
32. Denise Mina, *Conviction* (“Yes! My Denise Mina fandom continues unabated.” having said that, it’s a lesser Mina)

August

33. Sally Rooney, *Normal People* (“Couldn’t put it down, can’t put my finger on why. See Conversations.” this fwiw is the one with the young woman from a horrible mean family and a young man whose mom works for the mean family; I think I liked this better than *Conversations*? I think I remember struggling with the depiction of bdsm in the book as coming only from damage and everyone’s horrified reaction to it but I also, as said, couldn’t stop reading it) 📖
34. Charlie Jane Anders, *The City in the Middle of the Night* (“more Mouth and Gelet; less Sophie and Bianca; also, I really miss Octavia Butler. [this one is hard to be cursory about; I wanted to like it more than I did, but I didn’t dislike it]”)
35. Liane Moriarty, *What Alice Forgot* (“First half was too much, second less so, ending was wrong. // That was for #cursorybookreviews but also a longer bit: It was really hard for me to read the first ½ of this book, the premise of which is a woman who loses her memory of the last decade and although she thinks of herself as newly pregnant and about to be 30, she finds herself suddenly with 3 kids and separated from her spouse and about to be 40. The bafflement of “this is my life? what happened?” really resonated and made me super tense while reading it. But it’s also a good story about finding your way through the past and choosing your family.”) 📖
36. Linda Holmes, *Evvie Drake Starts Over* (“Actually pretty good; hits the sweet spot of fluffy and yet not.” lol cannot now actually recall any of the plot or characters)
37. Colson Whitehead, *The Nickel Boys* (“I don’t actually know what to say. Go read it. #cursorybookreviews #notamurdermystery BUT yes, it is, it absofuckinglutely is.” I suspect that like other Whitehead books, this one might repay a second read and come out even stronger)

September

38. Margaret Atwood, *The Handmaid's Tale* ("so much better than I'd remembered, so much more about longing for her daughter (read when it came out, taught it a couple of times in mid-90s)") 📖
39. Ali Smith, *Spring* ("bleak because our world is bleak and yet I will never not read Ali Smith")
40. Margaret Atwood, *The Testaments* ("Better than I expected but maybe not as great as the hype [and I still dislike the historians ending them both]")

October




41. Nevada Barr, *Track of the Cat* (Anna Pigeon #1 "Enjoyable, especially if you like national parks") 📖
42. Sarah Painter, *The Night Raven* (Crow Investigations #2 "Fun!")
43. Casey McQuiston, *Red, White & Royal Blue* ("very fun, and sweet.") 📖
44. Laura Lippman, *Lady in the Lake* ("Ehhh") 📖
45. Madeline ffitch, *Stay and Fight* ("Yes! Full of fury and love" The characters drove me nuts, each and every one of them, and they make so many mistakes and yet and yet and yet... I loved them) 📖
46. Nevada Barr, *A Superior Death* (Anna Pigeon #2 "Lake Superior! Mysterious deaths! Anna Pigeon!! Very fun.") 📖

November







47. Jane Casey, *Cruel Acts* (Maeve Kerrigan #8 "Fine but I didn't enjoy it as much as the others")
48. Madeline Miller, *The Song of Achilles* ("Powerfully, sorrowfully, and beautifully done." the sense of fate and its inevitability resonates both for the characters and for us; there's no escape and I kept having to put the book down because it was sometimes unbearable and I wept through the end; would read again) 📖
49. Sarah Painter, *The Silver Mark* (Crow Investigations #2 "Fun!")
50. Nevada Barr, *Ill Wind* ("Still good! (Mesa Verde this time, for those wanting to judge by the National Park)") 📖
51. Weike Wang, *Chemistry* ("So good!" I don't know why I waited to read this for so long; I loved how being a chem student wasn't incidental but chemical reactions woven throughout it)

December

52. Norton Anthology of Poetry, 6th editoin #NortonDecember (which is going so slowly and will surely last into the spring, and I'm ok with that)
53. Tessa Hadley, *Late in the Day: A novel* ("Meh?" look, maybe I'm just not in the place to read about middle aged folks dying and having affairs and rediscovering themselves? You'd think a lot of that would resonate but not so much in fact)
54. Sarah Pinborough, *Cross Her Heart* ("Better than I expected!")
55. Pat Barker, *Silence of the Girls* ("Pretty good [but I loved The Song of Achilles more, unfair though it might be to compare them]") 📖

56. Nevada Barr, *Firestorm* (AP #4 “Good! but.... How many National Parks can Anna Pigeon find herself solving mysteries in??”) 
57. Christi Daugherty, *The Echo Killing* (Harper McClain #1 “Really good!”)
58. Michael Connelly, *The Night Fire* (Rene Ballard #3 “Meh. [Maybe Connelly has just burnt out on Bosch? The last few books have not been nearly as good as they used to be]”) 
59. Herman Diaz, *In the Distance* (still reading! enjoying! don't know what to make of it yet!) 

and things I tried to read or actually checked out and thought about reading but just couldn't finish or even start: blue for the ones I actually started reading

1. Nicole Chung, *All You Can Ever Know* (I am looking forward to being in the mood to read this memoir! It's been a rough year so that has not happened yet)
2. Natalia Ginzburg, *All Our Yesterdays* (I don't even know what this is, but I see I bought it? Hmmm)
3. Ted Chiang, *Arrival* (short stories, see above)
4. Karen Brooks, *The Locksmith's Daughter* (I apparently sampled this?)
5. Suzanne Wolfe, *A Murder by Any Name* (I apparently sampled this too?)
6. Marlon James, *Black Wolf, Red Leopard* (this sat on my list forever, and then I started it but my brain couldn't handle all the details and I couldn't keep track of what was going on; not very far into, hoping that I'll start it again someday)
7. David Morrell, *Murder as Fine Art* (didn't even start but I guess I bought it? I think this was from a series of recs I got about historical mysteries)
8. Mary Gaitskill, *The Mare* (guy I was chatting with on tinder recommended it, checked it out, couldn't bring myself to read it) 
9. Colson Whitehead, *Sag Harbor* (bought it on sale, I think, still excited to read it when the mood hits)
10. Tim Maughan, *Infinite Detail* (I have friends who really like this! bought it, some day the mood will hit)
11. Esi Edugyan, *Washington Black* (fully expect I will read this someday, but loan expired before I picked it up) 
12. Stella Gibbons, *Cold Comfort Farm* (started, put down, wasn't the fluff I was looking for) 
13. Georgette Heyer, *Arabella* (you'd think I'd like this, but wasn't in the mood--see above; ended up reading *Evvie Drake* instead) 
14. Miriam Toews, *Women Talking* (i think i'd like this, haven't yet been in a place to read it)
15. Zen Cho, *Sorcerer to the Crown* (rec from newspaper maybe? expired before i got in the mood) 
16. Ocean Vuong, *On Earth We're Briefly Gorgeous* (read maybe a third, it was heavy, didn't want to deal with it) 

17. Mary Doria Russell, *The Sparrow* (speaking of heavy... I've read this before and have been haunted by it, was going to reread and then try the sequel but haven't been able to get myself to pick it up; was on sale so went ahead and bought it and someday...)
18. Christina Dalcher, *Vox* (bought because it was on sale and the description and opening was intriguing, but who knows when I'll actually want to read it)
19. Alice Hoffman, *Practical Magic* (started b/c someone loved the prequel, but just... didn't hit the right notes for me) 