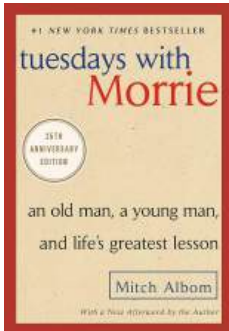
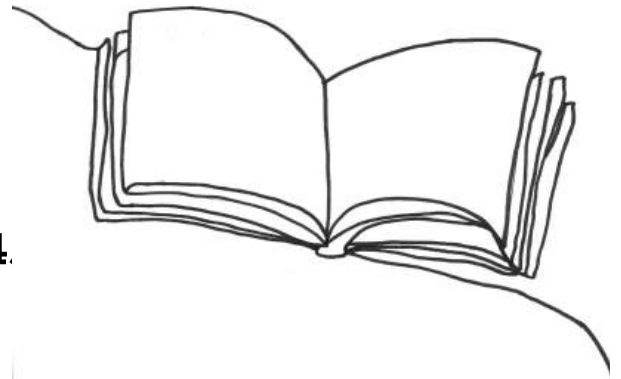


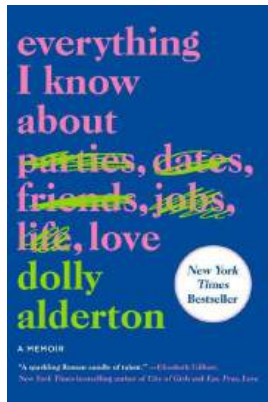
Saint Ann's School

Suggested Summer Reading List

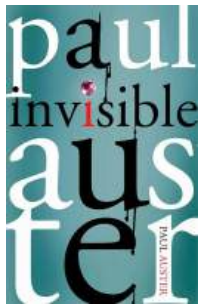
for High School, Faculty, and Staff, 2024.



Albom, Mitch. **Tuesdays with Morrie**. An oldie but a goodie. Albom recounts his Tuesday meetings with an old college professor, who is dying of ALS, where they discuss everything from death, greed and what a meaningful life is. Everyone should read this when feeling a bit uninspired by the apathy of life and want to reinvigorate the spark of living compassionately. (Fatima Bernal) 📖🎧



Alderton, Dolly. **Everything I Know About Love**. A memoir by the British journalist Dolly Alderton, in which the author recounts the adventures of a woman navigating her 20s. It's very funny and documents her feelings about love, both romantic and platonic and how those feelings changed throughout her teens and twenties into her 30s. It is probably one of my favorite books of all time! (Celia Frey) 📖🎧



Auster, Paul. **Invisible**. Just reread *Invisible* by Paul Auster, Brooklyn's own, one of the great writers of our time who recently passed away. What is invisible? Is there a secret agent, a murder, and an incestuous relationship? It depends on the point of view and that changes three times in the course of this masterful novel. It begins with a 20-year-old Columbia University student and his relationship with a visiting professor in the late 1960's, and ends on a distant island. (Richard Mann) 📖

Ayer, Pico. **The Half Known Life: In Search of Paradise**. Where does paradise really lie? To engage with—though certainly not answer—this question, Ayer journeys to mosques in Iran, holy sites in Israel, a hermitage in coastal California; he visits Buddhas in Sri Lanka, the Australian Outback, Ireland, Japan, and ends in Varanasi, the holy Indian city of the dead. Gratefully, he also travels within, and invites us to quietly—oh so quietly—do the same. A work of spiritual nonfiction and philosophy. A new genre for me. Loved it. Thanks, Laurie Duchovny, for recommending. (Laura Barnett) 📖🎧

Bachelder, Chris and Jennifer Habel. **Dayswork**. Melville fans, step forward. The narrator of this strange little novel is a woman researching a book about Melville. It's also a Covid-era novel about a woman losing her sense of reality while living with a cold husband and two daughters distracted by Zoom school. You basically get a short Melville biography plus a short pandemic novel, for the price of one. (Michael Donohue) 📖🎧

Bernhard, Thomas. **Correction**. A strong unrelenting form that centers around a man who had a desire to build a cone in the woods. (Chuck Roth) 📖

Read library books all summer with Sora: The Saint Ann's Digital Library!

Access it at <https://soraapp.com/library/saintannssny>. Many titles on this list are available on the digital library as an ebook, audiobook, or both. 📖 means ebook, 🎧 means audiobook, 📖🎧 means both. See the end of this list for more instructions.

Bird, Kai and Martin J. Sherwin. ***American Prometheus***. Whether or not you liked *Oppenheimer* you are likely to admit that this book, on which the film was based, has a much richer and more dramatic portrait of the nuclear scientist. I personally found the film disappointing, but I had a hunch there was a better story out there. I was right. (Michael Donohue) 📖🎧

Black, Sophie Cabot. ***Geometry of the Restless Herd***. A remarkable collection: pastoral poems with an elegant twist. Black's poems resonate with connections to the present whether it's agribusiness or small farms. The agony and ecstasy of nurturing and culling applied to both in animal and human relations. (Marty Skoble) 📖

Bohannon, Cat. ***Eve: How the Female Human Body Drove 200 Million Years of Human Evolution***. This stunning overview of the evolutionary history of the female human body is a corrective to centuries of work in anthropology and medicine that has made generalizations about our species based on male bodies alone. A noble project. But the reason to read this book, and it is a long one, with many footnotes, is the facts. So, so, so many strange and lovely facts. (Ben Rutter) 📖🎧

Brontë, Charlotte. ***Jane Eyre***. I found a copy on the street recently and it was perfect timing: never had read it, always had wanted to. First published in 1847—under a male pseudonym—and although I know very little about the genre(s) it belongs to, I was amazed at the clarity of Brontë's vision and voice. It ripples from feminism to romance to faith to class to wealth to family. After reading, I realized that any time is the perfect time to pick this up (from the street or elsewhere) and enjoy it for the first time. (Tom Hill) 📖🎧

Callahan, Eliza Barry. ***The Hearing Test***. Beautiful first novel by a Saint Ann's alum. Faced with sudden hearing loss, the author goes about her days documenting the surreal adjustments she is forced to make around everything she has known—the book seems to observe the known world in a previously unknown register, as though the frequency had just been shifted. This is beautiful writing and such a fascinating mind on display. (Liz Fodaski) 📖

Chekhov, Anton. ***The Duel***. A government inspector with a paucity of imagination; a “dull, little town” where nothing (ha!) happens; tea in the morning, vodka at dusk; ideas and ideologies; human beings tangle with God, Lucifer, bouts of blustery idealism, timidity, self-reproach, metaphysical isolation, lovesickness and ... humor! Returning to this Chekhov novella as an adult was a rich journey. Thanks Jack Allen Greenfield '23 for recommending. (Laura Barnett) 📖🎧

Cheung, Karen. ***Impossible City: A Hong Kong Memoir***. A story of a young woman's personal journey amidst a rapidly changing city. To read it in Hong Kong this winter was to have a wrenching guide book for something irrevocably slipping away. (Liam Flaherty) 📖🎧

Córdova, Gerardo Sámano. ***Monstrilio***. A mother feeds the lung of her dead son and ends up with something between a monster and a new child. This book grabs you from the start and won't let go. (Leda Fisher) 📖🎧

Crosley, Sloane. ***I Was Told There'd Be Cake***. If you are in between books and can't decide what to choose next from this reading list, I recommend *I Was Told There Would Be Cake*. Sloane Crosley's short essays are hilarious, relatable anecdotes about her life as a young woman in New York City. From the very first sentence I found myself laughing out loud, which we all know is the best medicine. (Donna Grosman) 📖🎧

Cunningham, Vinson. ***Great Expectations***. A young Black man, a super-smart college dropout who left school after his ex-girlfriend gave birth to their baby, finds himself with an increasingly powerful job in big-money fundraising for a presidential candidate who is exactly like Barack Obama. (When he was in his 20s the author worked for the Obama campaign, then in the White House.) Narrated by the protagonist, this is a short, deep page-turner about power and the ephemeral nature of good intentions—and a bunch of other important things. If you love stories involving music, religion, and Obama (I do)—try it. (Denise Rinaldo) 📖🎧

Diop, David. ***At Night All Blood Is Black***. This harrowing tale of Senegalese soldiers serving in World War I is a bold statement on the horrors of war. Beautifully written but not a beach read. (Jesse Kohn) 📖

Everett, Percival. ***Erasure***. The film *American Fiction* was based on this wild satire about race, publishing, parents, and the nature of imitative art. It's sometimes very unsettling, and it's often extremely funny. (Michael Donohue) 🎧

Faye, Gaël. ***Small Country***. A crisp, engrossing coming-of-age story set in Burundi in 1993 and 1994, just as neighboring Rwanda is consumed by violence. The narrator, like the author, has a French father and a Rwandan mother, and he looks back on events years later, from Paris. (Michael Donohue) 📖🎧

Fierstein, Harvey. ***I Was Better Last Night***. A memoir. I loved the insight into the theater world of decades ago, right on up to more recent years. But what I loved most was reading of Fierstein's journey toward discovering what he was put on this Earth to do. So much love in this book, and, of course, wit. (Margie Hanssens) 📖🎧

Fofana, Sidik. ***Stories from the Tenants Downstairs***. Eight inter-linked (and brilliantly written) stories about tenants in a Harlem apartment building as gentrification sweeps the neighborhood. Wonderful variety of narrators, each with a memorable and unique voice. (Michael Donohue) 🎧

Fransman, Karrie and Jonathan Plackett. ***Gender Swapped Fairy Tales***. Algorithm x 19th c. fairy tales = Handsome and The Beast, Cinder, Gretel & Hansel, and others. Creative technologist Plackett designed a program that swapped all gendered language in any text. "Weird," "Wow!" "What?" reacted my fifth-grade students. And me! The algorithm has no nuance. Embedded gender prejudices and truisms/falsisms are totally exposed. Fransman's remarkable (algorithm-free) illustrations. (Laura Barnett) 📖🎧

French, Howard W. ***Born In Blackness: Africa, Africans, and the Making of the Modern World, 1471 to the Second World War***. This book is written by a journalist who, because of personal and family history, turned to the history of Africa and its relations with Europe since 1471. His main point is that Africa was a driver of history as a partner in trade, and, later, tragically, as a source of labor. It offers a window into the large empires that were operating in Africa before first contact with Europe, and gradually paints a picture of the history of the modern world that centers trade with and trade in Africans as the main enabler of "The Age of Discovery" and all the milestones of progress that followed. As Americans we think of the transatlantic slave trade chiefly in terms of this country's involvement in it (as we should), but it's enlightening to read a book that fills in the details of how other countries were involved, and how for all of them Africa was of primary importance. (Jascha Narveson) 📖🎧

Galidi, Rodaan Al. ***Two Blankets and Three Sheets***. This book starts in 1998 with Samir landing in Schiphol airport seeking asylum in the Netherlands. It is a riveting, inspiring, sometimes humorous close up view of the hidden world of refugees. Relevant and a real page turner! (Jackie Henderson) 📖

Garber, Romina. ***Castle of the Cursed*** (to be released July 30th). A dark gothic YA fantasy romance written by the multi-talented NYT best-selling author who happens to be MY SISTER! Do you like gothic Spanish novels with a hint of paranormal including vampires and intense complicated characters with a brooding romance? Also a great way to practice some Spanish (although it is in English). Content warnings: trauma/mental health. (Meli Garber) 📖

González, Xóchitl. ***Anita de Monte Laughs Last***. I love how this story alternated between the points of view of the two richly-painted Latinx female protagonists—entrenched in the art world in different eras but having experiences that overlap in many ways. I raced through this one: biting commentary on gender, race and privilege in the rarefied world of art; wild love affairs; toxic friendships; a murder "mystery;" and even some supernatural elements all kept me absolutely hooked. (Molly Sissors) 📖

Gray, Alasdair. **Poor Things**. Is Bella Baxter a Frankenstein's monster, or are the men in her life determined to rewrite her story to suit their needs? Truth really is in the eye of the beholder in this fantastical book about the nature of storytelling, genre, and truth itself. This deeply riveting tale is peppered with thoughts on socio-political issues, feminism/patriarchy, and it's illustrated with anatomical drawings and "handwritten" letters which make the book a truly novel experience. ***Deals with topics of suicide, pregnancy loss, and sex work*** (Christina Rodriguez) 📖🎧

Groff, Lauren. **The Vaster Wilds**. A servant girl escapes from a colonial settlement (I think if you know more than I do, you know it's Jamestown? Which I didn't know?) during a time of terrible hardship (the details of which unfold slowly over the course of the novel). She makes her way through, well, the vaster wilds of her new homeland. We move between kaleidoscopic memories of her life before crossing the Atlantic, dreamlike interludes of her time in the place I now know is Jamestown and the terrible and beautiful landscape she traverses in search of freedom, safety, community. I read it too fast because I had to know what happened next, but not fast enough to keep my heart from cracking open. (Melissa Kantor) 📖🎧

Grose, Jessica. **Screaming on the Inside: The Unsustainability of American Motherhood**. The title pretty much says it all and while reading this I went ahead and screamed on the outside too. I enjoyed the mix of memoir with historical and scientific research. (Molly Sissors) 📖🎧

Hagood, Caroline. **Filthy Creation**. A terrific gothic novel, a Bildungsroman, a feminist manifesto, a satire on art extremism, and a page-turner. What more could you want? It's over the top and then some, plus it's home grown in many ways. (Marty Skoble)

Hannah, Kristin. **The Women**. I always enjoy Kristin Hannah's historical fiction and this book did not disappoint. It follows a woman serving in the Vietnam war as a nurse, both before and after her service. I particularly love Hannah's development of characters. Highly recommend it! (Elizabeth Sheridan Rossi) 🎧



Harding, Paul. **This Other Eden**. We read this in the faculty-staff book group, so ask other people for their reviews of it as well! I found it helpful to know that it is meant to be a fictional story of the real island community of Malaga, a mixed-race settlement that was eradicated as part of the eugenics movement and a gentrification land-takeover. There is fundamentally no "good" part of the tale, no real possible happy ending. However, the intense tragedy of the plot was balanced by beautiful imagery, scenery, vocabulary, biology, and characters who had a depth and strength and beauty all their own. Harding framed his story in exquisite detail but left the right size holes for me to want to climb through into Apple Island. (Leah Kaplan) 📖🎧

Hendren, Sara. **What Can a Body Do?: How We Meet the Built World**. An accessible starting point for disability studies theory, meditation on (in)dependence, and exploration of what it is we actually choose when we make decisions about what is and isn't in the world around us. (Adam Wyrn) 📖🎧



Highsmith, Patricia. **Edith's Diary**. If you want a read this summer that brings on some existential angst and dread but also appreciation for writing of such power, then this is the novel for you. As always, intriguing characters who you fear could be a little like you. You'll see it described as a thriller, but that is just because no one really knows how to contain Highsmith's work to a genre. That, too, is an indication of this writer's expansive talent. (Margie Hanssens)


Hoke, Henry. **Open Throat**. See L.A. through the eyes of a gay mountain lion who lives under the Hollywood sign. Don't like animal POV? I don't care, you should read this one. Incredibly beautiful and can be finished in one day. (Sara Gunn) 📖🎧

Hughes, Langston. **The Big Sea**. Langston Hughes' retrospective memoir at 39. A languorous read, that brings you to the heart of the great Modernist movements. Breezy, sometimes even chatty, filled with incredible anecdotes and subtle


humor. A perfect accompaniment to the Harlem Renaissance exhibit at the Met, which you can still catch until July 28. (Yoni Greenwood)  



Karnow, Stanley. *In Our Image: America's Empire in the Philippines*. Should stand alongside his work on Vietnam in the annals of American imperial overreach (Liam Flaherty) 



Kennedy, Jonathan. *Pathogenesis: A History of the World in Eight Plagues*. This is a fascinating book that breaks down human history from the neolithic, to the age of empires, to present times, explaining how infectious diseases were more responsible for historical events than many realize. Do you know how the fall of the Roman Empire or Transatlantic slavery were influenced by pathogens? If you are curious, check this book out! (Nicholas Harbison)  



Klune, TJ. *The House in the Cerulean Sea*. A friend gave me this book after it came out saying it was the best thing he had read in a long time. I just got around to reading it this year and I couldn't agree more! It's a touching romance about queer love and family—great for YA or adult audiences! I cannot recommend it enough—read it now before the sequel arrives in September! (Nicholas Harbison) 



Kolbert, Elizabeth. *The Sixth Extinction: An Unnatural History*. A well-written book about past extinctions and the human impacts that many scientists see as creating an ongoing extinction event. Kolbert connects historical examples with species currently in decline. A great read. (Nicholas Harbison)

Kraus, Daniel. *Whalefall*. What would you call this book? Science horror? Science thriller? Whatever you want to call it, it is gripping. Seventeen-year-old Jay Gardiner has decided to try to retrieve the remains of his father, who died off the coast of Monastery Bay in California. Jay, an experienced if out-of-practice scuba diver, gets swallowed by an eighty-foot, sixty-ton sperm whale when he has only one hour of oxygen left in his tank.  (Ragan O'Malley)

Krauss, Nicole. *To Be a Man*. Ten short stories. The language soars, sears, and truly moved me. Each character is specific. And yet, at the same time, each one—even a newborn—is vast. Legacy, memory, and diasporic consciousness are themes. In each narrative—and within each person—the intimate and global contours of Jewishness unravel and intertwine. (Laura Barnett)  

Labatut, Benjamin. *The Maniac*. The story of the physicist and mathematician Jon von Neumann told through the fictional monologues of family members and colleagues, *The Maniac* also takes you inside the Manhattan Project. Alongside all of this history, we get the birth of computers and artificial intelligence and the first human-machine go competition. I think the novel is asking: What's to become of us? (Or maybe that's just me.) (Melissa Kantor)  

Lacey, Catherine. *Biography of X*. "It is her explicit wish not to be captured in a biography, not now and not after she's gone." And yet. Following the death of X, the extremely secretive and volatile celebrity performance artist, her widow begins researching her life, determined to uncover the seemingly innocuous facts about her past that X withheld throughout their marriage. Set in an alternate United States, in which the Southern Territory seceded into tyrannical theocracy in 1945—with a recognizable New York art scene. Includes footnotes, photographs, and ephemera from the archive. I loved it. (B Mann)  

Lacey, Catherine. *Biography of X*. A book about self-invention, intimacy, and the space between an artist, her art, and her partner. This well-crafted book-within-a-book intrigued and delighted me. It asks how much an artist's work is a representation of themselves, their politics, and their relationships. (Laura Winnick)  

Lieu, Susan. *The Manicurist's Daughter*. An emotional (yet amusing) memoir, Susan Lieu takes us through her grief-stricken childhood, misguided adulthood, the hardships of her Vietnamese refugee parents, and eventually finding her peace in the chaos that was the search for answers after losing her powerhouse matriarch mother to a botched

tummy tuck. Recounting her determination and struggle, Susan spares us no details about her familial trauma and the isolation that comes with grief. Her story will make you cry, laugh, rage and leave you hungry by the end of it... Oh forgot to mention the glorification of Vietnamese dishes found all over this book. (Fatima Bernal) 📖

Linden, Gillian. **Negative Space**. Linden used to teach at Saint Ann's—we know her as Gillian Bagley. This witty but dark comedy of manners is set in a school that often sounds a lot like our very own (but don't worry, it's not!). There's a send-up of an English department meeting—about whether reports are going to go digital—that's worth the price of the book. (Michael Donohue) 📖🎧

Loory, Ben. **Tales of Falling and Flying**. These stories (many feel like fairy tales) start with anything and go anywhere. Some are quiet, others fantastical. One of my favorites goes like this: "James K. Polk used to keep bonsai trees up on the roof of the White House. Not a lot of people know that about him, but it's an important fact." (Michael Pershan) 📖

Lyon, Rachel. **Fruit of the Dead**. Breathtaking. An anxious, rebellious daughter ensnared by a powerful titan of industry, an anxious protective mother whose agro-business is falling apart (Persephone and Demeter). Their alternating perspectives are vividly convincing. Lyon's writing is totally immersive. And she is another one of ours. (Marty Skoble) 📖

Makkai, Rebecca. **The Great Believers**. I hate talking to strangers, and yet, this book is so good that when I see someone reading it on the subway, I stop and talk to them about how jealous I am that they still have pages left of this beautiful thing to read. (Sarah Moon) 📖🎧

Mandel, Eli Payne. **The Grid**. A remarkable, erudite, and captivating book that begins with a poetic narrative centered on Alice Kober's efforts to decode Linear B and ends with epistolary poems centered on exile (esp. Ovid's) and the search for "belonging," that other kind of meaning. A work of extraordinary scholarship and experimentation by one of our own. (Marty Skoble) 📖

Mandel, Emma St. John. **Station Eleven**. "Read *Station Eleven*..." Diane Exavier, playwrighting colleague, suggested in 2021 when I was feeling VERY low about the future of live performance. "It's about theater saving the world." Despite the rec, I'm not a fan of apocalyptic fiction, so didn't get around to reading until this summer. WOW! What a page turner! A prescient book about a planet-altering pandemic and a group of traveling actors and musicians who create art within and despite. (Laura Barnett) 📖🎧

Mattoo, Priyanka. **Bird Milk & Mosquito Bones**. I'm really looking forward to reading this memoir coming out in June. It's an account of "one woman's peripatetic search for home, from Kashmir to England to Saudi Arabia to Michigan to Rome and, finally, to Los Angeles." (Ronica Bhattacharya) 📖🎧

McBride, James. **The Color of Water: A Black Man's Tribute to His White Mother**. "I wrote this book for my mother, and her mother, and mothers everywhere," writes McBride in his dedication. Part memoir, part oral history, lots of Brooklyn, and all love, this slim, trenchant NYTimes bestseller and National Book Award winner informs and speaks to the extraordinary *Heaven and Earth Grocery Store*, written two + decades later (Laura Barnett) 📖🎧

McDermott, Alice. **Absolution**. Two young, white American women living in Vietnam with their husbands (American advisors to the Vietnamese government—this is 1963) forge a friendship as they navigate motherhood, infertility, marriage, the politics of expatriate life and their evolving relationship. Their lives, beliefs and follies are richly evoked, and the majority of the novel is perfect, though it gets a little thin when (far along) the book switches time period and narrator. Still, couldn't be more worth reading! (Melissa Kantor) 📖

Millner, Maggie. **Couplets**. I actually did not like this book, but it was recommended to me by someone whose opinion I genuinely value and whose taste I often share. Ultimately, I think I just have a hard time with novels in verse, because it

seems to make a sort of gimmick out of poetry. But there is a lot to like here—its speaker's willingness to be exposed, for one, and the messy love story for two. The language. And you can read it in one sitting! (Liz Fodaski) 📖🎧

Mistry, Rohinton. ***Family Matters***. A patriarch's broken ankle necessitates his leaving the apartment he shares with his stepchildren and moving in with his daughter, her husband and their young sons. Mistry's beautiful novel is a portrait of a family and a city (Bombay) in transition. If you're wondering, "Should I be thinking Tolstoy?" The answer is: yes. (Melissa Kantor) 📖

Monk, Paul C. R. ***The Huguenot Chronicles: Merchants of Virtue, Voyage of Malice, Land of Hope***. I just finished *THE HUGUENOT CHRONICLES TRILOGY*! This was a delicious tome of a book about a family being driven out of France because Louis XIV wants all protestants to convert to Catholicism! This historical novel by Paul C.R. Monk is a page turner! (Mary Louise Gower)

Morris, Jan. ***Pax Britannica***. Morris, who died in 2020, was perhaps best known for her memoir *Conundrum*, about her gender reassignment surgery (which she underwent in 1972). *Pax Britannica* is her incredibly well written account of the daily workings of the British Empire at its apex in the 1890s. There is so much unbelievable detail in here. (Michael Donohue) 🎧

Ng, Celeste. ***Our Missing Hearts***. This is a story about mothers, their children, libraries, New York City, stories, poems, movements both important and misunderstood. The story takes place in a not-so-distant dystopian future, reimagining a different sort of pandemic but with familiar sentiments of xenophobia and standing up for what's right in a way that is totally connected to our lives from 2020. Ng helped me to process and connect the dots of the human experience from the last five years of living and mothering through the pandemic and beyond. (Mo Yousef-Morales) 📖🎧



O'Conner, Flannery. ***The Violent Bear It Away***. Recommended to me by a friend who was raised in an evangelical cult as the book that best captured the trauma of that experience. The violence of the title--nearly all psychological--is as gripping as it is tragic. Small in scope but searing, a short read that I couldn't put down. Beautiful and terrible, a true piece of Americana (and an archetypal Southern Gothic). One of the most memorable books I've read in years. (Yoni Greenwood) 📖🎧


Orange, Tommy. ***Wandering Stars***. *Wandering Stars* tackles America's legacy of brutality toward Indigenous peoples and follows the impact on one family's descendants. Though *Wandering Stars* is a standalone novel, the connection to the author's 2018 novel, *There, There*, adds depth for readers familiar with his previous work. (Ellen Friedrichs) 📖🎧


Osman, Richard. ***The Thursday Murder Club*** (plus three sequels). I've really been enjoying the books in this series (there are four so far). They're especially great for summer reading! A group of four friends living in a community for older folks get together weekly to attempt to solve cold murder cases. The characters are delightful and the hijinks are very funny. (Elizabeth Sheridan Rossi) 📖🎧



O'Sullivan, Suzanne. ***Sleeping Beauties: And Other Stories of Mystery Illness***. O'Sullivan documents outbreaks of psychosomatic illnesses (once called mass hysteria, now called functional neurological disorder or FND). In Sweden, 169 young asylum seekers spend their days in a comatose state, victims of something called "resignation syndrome." In the mountains of Columbia, upwards of 1,000 schoolgirls experience fainting spells and convulsions. How is this possible? It is possible, apparently, when external factors combine with brain function to create disabling symptoms. This is a medical page-turner. (Ragan O'Malley) 🎧


Parker, Morgan. ***You Pay For What You Get***. Morgan Parker is a terrific poet ("There Are Things More Beautiful Than Beyonce") and also a fine YA author (*Who Put This Song On?*), so I eagerly awaited her debut essay collection. These deeply personal and introspective essays are about therapy, depression, leaving her conservative Christian school in



California for college life at Columbia and dating as a weird Black woman. My favorite piece was titled "Self-Help". (Ebony Murphy)  


Patel, Neel. *If You See Me, Don't Say Hi*. Thanks to Ebony Murphy for the tip on this one! I devoured this riveting collection of short fiction in one fell swoop. A great escape! And I always appreciate a new or fresh perspective on second-generation American experience, particularly related to the South Asian diaspora. (Ronica Bhattacharya) 



Pfeffer, Anshel. *Bibi*. This biography of Benjamin Netanyahu, written by a *Haaretz* journalist, doubles as a political history of the State of Israel. Published back a million years ago in 2022, it is now badly in need of an update, but holds up as an informative and readable source for understanding the man who has lately dominated Israel's tumultuous politics. (Michael Pershan) 



Raybourn, Deanna. *Killers of a Certain Age*. Great beach read if you like thrillers with a twist. This one features retired female assassins with hilarious takes on female aging. (Marty Skoble)  



Robinson, Marilynne. *Housekeeping*. Two sisters, Ruth and Lucille, are haphazardly raised by their grandmother, great-aunts, and the do-gooder, finger-wagging ladies of Fingerbone, Idaho, until the arrival of transient Aunt Sylvie, with her particular relationship to (im)permanence and an eccentric approach to domesticity (hence, the book's title). Writing, alternately voluptuous and precise, alternates between the language of memory and the urgency of here-and-now. Underneath the quietness: the echo of violent deaths and the brutal, extravagant weather of the Far West. Thanks to Mike Donohue for recommending. (Laura Barnett) 


Roth, Joseph. *The Radetzky March*. The masterpiece from Mitteleuropa's poet laureate of nostalgia and displacement. Sometimes the memories of youth are the greatest allegiance, and the empire of the mind lasts the longest. (Liam Flaherty)  

Rush, Norman. *Mating*. When an intellectual appears in a novel, it is typically as a figure of pity or ridicule. But not in *Mating*, a great pretentious word-drunk hetero love odyssey between two highbrow white social theorists living in the utopian Botswana rural collectivist matriarchy lately founded by the male partner. Rush is excellent on his title subject, but the prose is so exuberant, weird, and dense with German wordplay that I found I simply could put this book down, and did, again and again, for six months. A masterpiece. (Ben Rutter) 

Shavit, Ari. *My Promised Land: The Triumph and Tragedy of Israel*. A complicated, reflective, deeply personal, highly nuanced history of Israel and the Zionist movement. My mother failed to get me to read this fascinating book, but Ezra Klein's interview with its author succeeded. (Melissa Kantor)  

Shraya, Vivek. *She of the Mountains*. Gorgeous and complex, beautifully written and hard to put down. The story of a man coming to terms with his body and his sexuality, interspersed with reimagined mythology. (Leda Fisher)  

Siddiqi, Ayesha Manzanir. *The Centre*. Though stuck writing Bollywood subtitles, a young Pakistani translator in London dreams of working on great literary masterpieces. When she wrangles an invite to a mysterious, wildly expensive language school that promises fluency in any language in 10 days, she pays up and enrolls. Then, things get sinister. About translation, class, and identity, plus it's funny and dishy. (Denise Rinaldo)  

Simmons, Dan. *The Terror*. A fascinating take on a real (and really doomed) 1845-47 expedition to find the Northwest Passage. *The Terror* is told from multiple perspectives including various ships' officers, sailors, indigenous people, and families left behind. It includes some supernatural and horror elements but excels at painting a realistic picture of life in the arctic for a group of hubristic explorers. (Eli Forsythe) 

Singh, Simon. ***The Simpsons and Their Mathematical Secrets***. Simon Singh's book is a unique blend of humor, pop culture, and intellectual curiosity, exploring the hidden mathematics in hilarious episodes of *The Simpsons*. It offers a fresh perspective on the beauty and relevance of mathematics in everyday life. Each chapter delves into various episodes, tackling intriguing mathematical topics like sizes of infinity and 4-dimensional Klein bottles! Singh presents complex concepts in an accessible way, making mathematics easy to understand for a broad audience. The book's second half explores similar ideas in *Futurama*, created by the same talented minds behind *The Simpsons*. A great read for faculty, students, math enthusiasts, and anyone who enjoys learning something new! (Kalim Khogiani-Nguyen) 📖

Smith, Bud. ***Teenager***. I read this a few months ago, and what I remember now is the basic plot (troubled teens, Bonnie and Clyde, horses, guns) and how packed it is with remarkable, perfect little turns of phrase. (Michael Pershan) 📖🎧

Srinivasan, Amia. ***The Right to Sex***. I taught the title essay and its "coda" in my elective this year, but I recommend the whole book, which is a really thorough exploration of the lineage of feminism in this century. Srinivasan brings exhaustive breadth and depth to the contemporary conversation around the politics of sex. Every idea gets its due, and Srinivasan's own contributions are full of wisdom and empathy. (Liz Fodaski) 📖

Sterling, Michelle Min. ***Camp Zero***. By 2049, Earth has become almost uninhabitable. Those with means are moving to protected island enclaves, and those without are living from one weather event to the next. *Camp Zero* is told through three perspectives, Rose, a young working-class woman who moves to the North for a chance to get her Korean mother into a climate-safe community, Grant, a wealthy white Ivy grad looking to escape his privilege; and an unnamed member of a women's collective charged with determining what it would take to sustain life in Canada's frigid tundra. Though it deals with bleak subjects, like *Station Eleven*, *Camp Zero* also offers hope for a very changed world. (Ellen Friedrichs) 📖

Szabo, Magda. ***The Door*** and ***Katalin Street***. Went deep with this precise and uncanny writer on a trip to Hungary this year. (Liam Flaherty) 📖🎧

Tóibín, Colm. ***A Guest at the Feast***. A feast itself: a tasting menu of personal and literary essays all, of course, beautifully written. (Marty Skoble) 📖

Törzs, Emma. ***Ink Blood Sister Scribe***. As a book lover, this is on my summer reading list because what is more captivating than magical books with deadly secrets? With women protagonists and themes of familial loyalty and betrayal, *Ink Blood Sister Scribe* seems like the magical realism fiction that's right up my alley. (Asia Jackson) 📖🎧

Verghese, Abraham. ***The Covenant of Water***. If you're a fan of multi-generational epics (think *Pachinko* or *In the House of the Spirits*), try this book! It tells the story of a family in southern India in the twentieth century and sheds important light on the power of empathy, persistence, and faith in challenging oppression. (Amanda Martínez Robiolio) 📖🎧

Wadud, Asiya. ***Mandible Wishbone Solvent***. The poems in this collection go deep into the inner ear, resonating, incantatory, haunting. Asiya's sonic power is matched the acrobatic leaps of imagery. There are a few prose sections too, and they are equally impressive. (Marty Skoble)

Waldman, Adelle. ***Help Wanted***. This workplace comedy reminded me of a darker version of the sitcom *Superstore* (with dashes of *The Office*). A look into the complicated lives and on-the-job dynamics of the warehouse team that keeps a big box store running. Funny, touching and, ultimately, a damning commentary on how capitalist America treats low-wage workers. (Molly Sissors) 📖🎧

Weiner, Jennifer. ***The Breakaway***. If you like bicycling, or have ever thought that it might be fun to take a bike trip, and you are ready for a diverting read, then this is the perfect novel for the summer! Jennifer Weiner is known for her "beach reads" and lighthearted stories, but this tale of a group of people bicycling their way through upstate New York has some

unexpected subplots. There is some romance, some family drama, and some surprising twists and turns, and Weiner does a great job of taking the reader along for the ride! (Stephanie Schragger) 📖

Welz, Adam. ***The End of Eden: Wild Nature in the Age of Climate Breakdown***. Each chapter in this book details a different aspect of climate change, for example extreme weather or more frequent fires, and how ecosystems are struggling to survive them. Welz walks a line by giving context in the natural patterns of change while acknowledging (but not harping on) human impact. The writing explains the science in an easy-to-read way and while the tone can be elegiac there are glimmers of hope. (Nicholas Harbison)

Wentz, Brooke. ***Transfigured New York: Interviews with Experimental Artists and Musicians, 1980-1990***. A series of interviews, originally on WKCR's "Transfigured Night" show, with the genre ignoring pioneers who created the Downtown music scene of the late 70's and 80's. Take it from me, take it from them: it was good to be alive and listening at the original Knitting Factory on East Houston street back in the day. (Liam Flaherty) 📖

Whitehead, Colson. ***Crook Manifesto***. In addition to being a terrific page-turner, this novel offers a stunningly insightful take on the nature and ubiquity of structural corruption. No governmental program will ever seem the same after this. (Marty Skoble) 📖🎧

Woolf, Virginia. ***Orlando***. Oh, *Orlando*! How I miss you and your oak tree, birds, words, legs, teacups, your convention and lack of convention, your judgment and lack of judgment, your searching, yearning, impulsivity, lust, improbability, heroics, extravagance, self-doubt, and time-travel. These words (and many others: transformation, discovery, performance, narrative, identity, love) were collected by the cast of the Spring HS play, an adaptation of *Orlando* by Sarah Ruhl. A fanciful novel about time, ahead of its time, written nearly 100 years ago. (Laura Barnett) 📖🎧

Yarros, Rebecca. ***Fourth Wing***. Violet is forced by her mother (the general) to join the Basgiath War College to become an elite dragon rider. It's a death sentence for her because she's small, fragile, and hated by her peers. Can she defy the odds? The options are graduate or die. Lust, dragons, and battles—this very fun book kept me up late reading. Sequel: *Iron Flame*. (Ragan O'Malley) 📖🎧



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Happy reading.

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