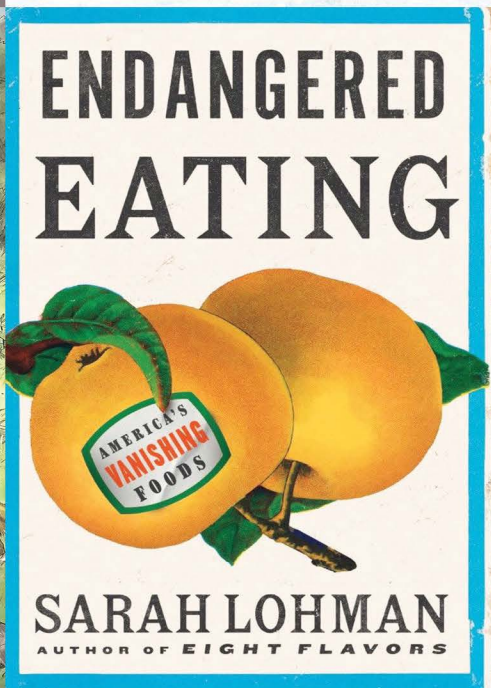
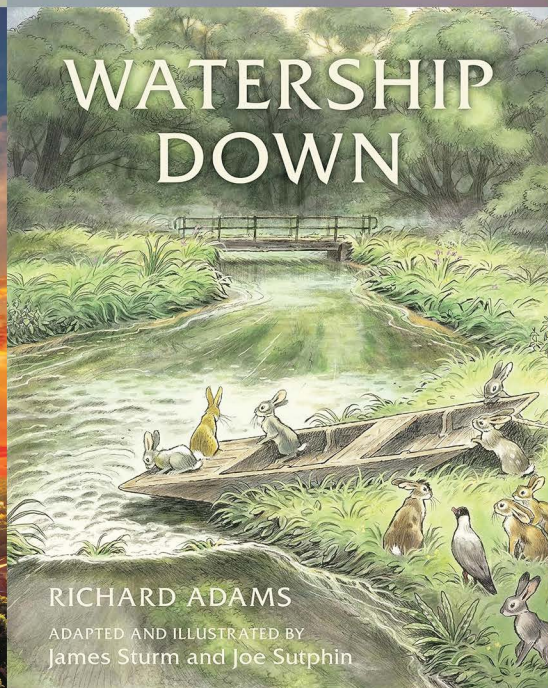
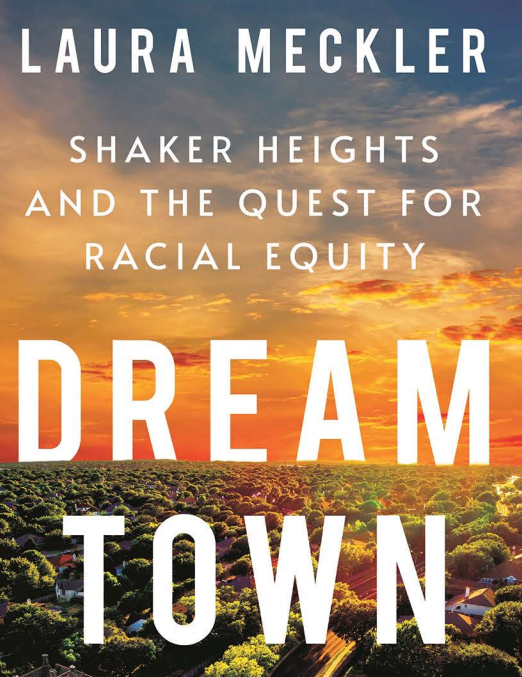
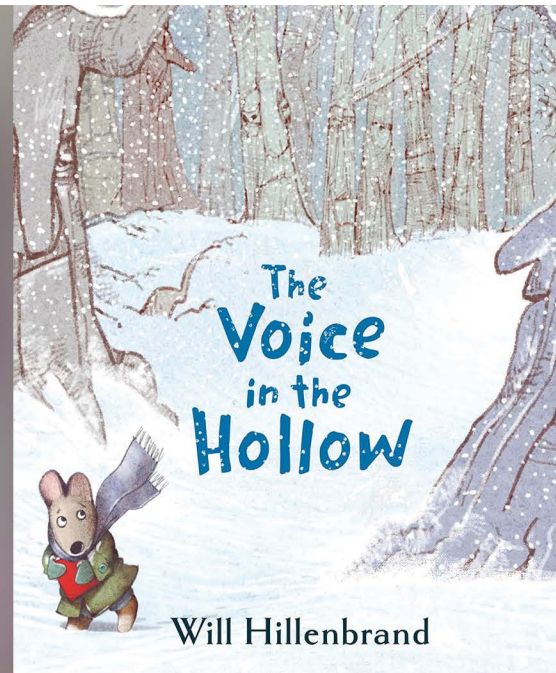
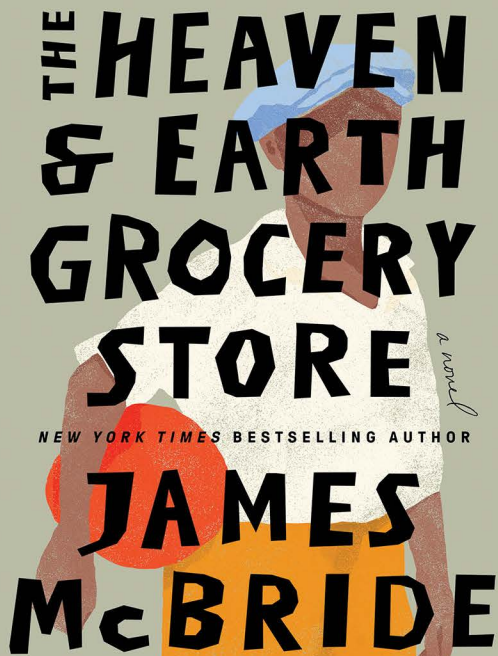


OHIO *ana* QUARTERLY

FALL 2024 | VOL. 67 NO. 4



Collecting, Preserving, and Celebrating Ohio Literature

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Who We Are: The Ohioana Library Association

At Ohioana, we elevate Ohio’s written works and the creative minds behind them, celebrating our collective literary history. Whether it’s through our unique events and programming, our extensive library collection, or our print and digital publications, everything we do is with the goal of connecting readers and Ohio writers.

OHIOana QUARTERLY

FALL 2024

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The *Ohioana Quarterly* (ISSN 0030-1248) is currently published four times a year by the Ohioana Library Association, 274 East First Avenue, Suite 300, Columbus, Ohio 43201. Individual subscriptions to the *Ohioana Quarterly* are available through membership in the Association; \$50 of membership dues pays the required subscription. Single copy \$6.50. U.S. postage paid at Columbus, Ohio. Send address changes to Ohioana Quarterly, 274 E. First Ave., Suite 300, Columbus, Ohio, 43201. Copyright © 2024 by the Ohioana Library Association. All rights reserved. Printed by PXPOHIO.

From the Director

Dear Members & Friends,



Photo by Chris Walker

Welcome to the autumn issue of the *Ohioana Quarterly*! It's been a busy several months since our last edition, with the 83rd Ohio Book Awards taking place on Tuesday, October 29, at the Ohio Statehouse. It was a fantastic evening of celebrating Ohio authors, their books, and the 95th birthday of the Ohioana Library. In this issue, we are excited to share information about the winners and photos from the evening so you can share in the fun!

During the event, we also honored Sienna Zeilinger, the winner of the 2024 Walter Rumsey Marvin Grant, our special prize given to an Ohio writer age thirty or younger who has not yet published a book. As is tradition, we are sharing her award-winning essay in this issue. We know you will enjoy the work of this up-and-coming new writer!

Additionally, we are excited to present our last in the series of four articles on Rod Serling and his connection to Ohio. This quarter, we present an article by Mark Dawidziak about his experience at SerlingFest, which took place in Binghamton, New York, in September of this year. We recently announced that we were successfully awarded a historical marker from the Ohio History Connection to honor Serling. This marker will be dedicated next October with a celebration in partnership with Antioch College and the Yellow Springs Film Festival. We look forward to sharing more information in the coming months.

On page 39 of this issue, we also share our new membership and donor levels and their associated benefits. These include a new Premium Membership level, as well as four new sponsorship levels, each with a variety of benefits designed to help us build closer relationships with our supporters. I hope you will review these and consider renewing or joining at one of the membership levels, or donating to help support our work and the new programs we are planning!

Finally, you will find the list of new books added to our collection and book reviews, including a review of Will Hillenbrand's *The Voice in the Hollow*, winner of the 2024 Juvenile Ohio Book Award, written by my seven-year-old granddaughter. And speaking of reading, if you haven't yet seen my new weekly blog, *Stories From the Stacks*, please visit <https://www.ohioana.org/recent-news/> to learn about some of the fascinating materials that we have in our collection. The blog is published every Wednesday. I hope you find the stories as intriguing as I do when I write them!

As we enter the cooler months, it is a great time to visit us at Ohioana—and to curl up at home under a blanket with a book by an Ohio author. I know that will be my plan for the cold winter nights! Thank you for supporting Ohioana. We look forward to getting to know all of you better.

Warmly,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kimberlee L. Kiehl". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kim Kiehl
Executive Director

ON THE COVER

This issue's cover, designed by Kathryn Powers, celebrates the 2024 Ohio Book Award winners. Read more about these books and relive moments from the October 29 ceremony on page 4.

Celebrating the 2024 Ohio Book Awards

By Kathryn Powers

Event photos by Lunar Pine Creative



October 29 was a night to remember with two celebrations in one special event: the 83rd annual Ohio Book Awards and the Ohioana Library's 95th birthday! This milestone occasion took place in the atrium of the Ohio Statehouse where one hundred and fifty attendees enjoyed 1920s-themed food, decorations, and festivities.

The program included the presentation of book awards in seven categories, as well as the Walter Rumsey Marvin Grant for an emerging Ohio writer. After the presentation of each award and remarks from the winners, the authors and illustrators participated in one-on-one conversations with guest interviewers, sharing details about their books, inspirations, and creative processes.

The event held some surprises, too. John Sullivan, retiring president of the Ohioana Board of Trustees,

received a gavel and plaque in honor of his four years of service, and he shared emotional parting words. The audience was also enchanted by two musical pieces. "Our First Lady," a composition by Grace E. Kaiser written for Ohioana's founder, Martha Kinney Cooper, was sung by Ohioana's program manager, Miriam Nordine, with accompaniment on keyboard by Theofania Music. At the end of the program, Theofania played her original composition "The Gates," dedicated to Ohioana.

The Ohio Channel streamed the awards ceremony live, which can be viewed at: <https://www.ohiochannel.org/video/ohioana-awards-ohio-book-awards-2024>.

Congratulations again to this year's winners! Thank you to everyone who joined us, and a special thanks to the sponsors and contributors whose generous support made the 2024 Ohio Book Awards possible.



FICTION

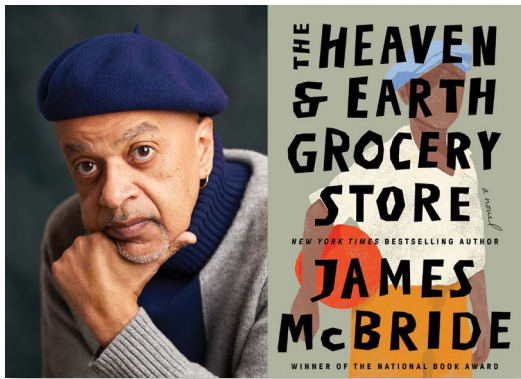


Photo by Chia Messina

James McBride, *The Heaven & Earth Grocery Store*, Riverhead Books

James McBride is an award-winning author, musician, and screenwriter. His body of work includes the *New York Times* bestseller and Oprah’s Book Club selection *Deacon King Kong*, the National Book Award–winning *The Good Lord Bird*, the American classic *The Color of Water*, and *Kill ‘Em and Leave*, a biography of James Brown. Named one of *TIME* magazine’s 100 Most Influential People of 2024 and the recipient of a National Humanities Medal, McBride is a distinguished writer in residence at New York University. Born in Brooklyn, New York, McBride earned a bachelor of arts degree in composition from the Oberlin Conservatory of Music in Ohio.

The Heaven and Earth Grocery Store is a novel about the challenges people face who live on the margins of white, Christian America, and what they must do to survive. In 1972, development workers in Pottstown, Pennsylvania, discover a skeleton at the bottom of a well. Who is the skeleton, and how did it get there? These long-held secrets are kept by the residents of Chicken Hill, a dilapidated neighborhood where Jewish immigrants and African Americans live side by side, sharing ambitions and sorrows. When the truth is finally revealed about what happened in Chicken Hill, as well as the role the town’s white establishment played in it, McBride shows readers that even in the darkest times, it is love and community—heaven and earth—that sustain us.

NONFICTION & READERS’ CHOICE AWARD

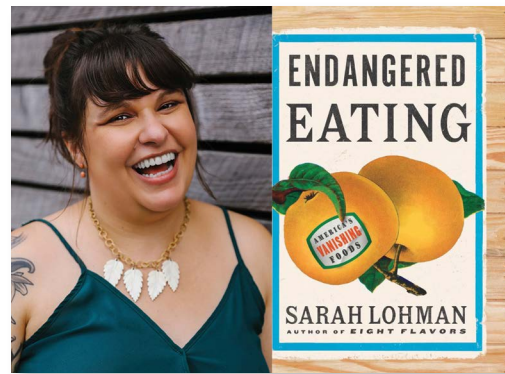


Photo by Brittanie Bond

Sarah Lohman, *Endangered Eating: America’s Vanishing Foods*, W. W. Norton & Company

Sarah Lohman is a culinary historian and the author of the bestselling books *Endangered Eating: America’s Vanishing Foods* and *Eight Flavors: The Untold Story of American Cuisine*. She focuses on the history of food as a way to explore the stories of diverse American cultures. *Endangered Eating* was named a *New York Times* Editors’ Choice and one of the Best Books of 2023 by Amazon, *Food & Wine*, and Adam Gopnik of *Milk Street Radio*. Currently based in Las Vegas, Nevada, she is a columnist for *Gastro Obscura* and cohost of the *Las Vegas City Cast* podcast. Lohman was born in Hinckley, Ohio, and earned a bachelor of fine arts degree from the Cleveland Institute of Art.

Endangered Eating draws inspiration from the Ark of Taste, a list compiled by Slow Food International that catalogs important regional foods. Traveling across the United States, Lohman learns about the distinct ingredients at risk of being lost, from heirloom sugarcane in Hawaii to America’s oldest peanut in the Lowcountry of South Carolina. Her teachers are the caretakers and advocates of these rare ingredients: shepherds, fishers, farmers, scientists, historians, and activists. Animated by stories, yet grounded in historical research, *Endangered Eating* gives readers the tools to support community food organizations and producers that work to preserve local culinary traditions and rare, cherished foods—before it’s too late.

POETRY



Photo courtesy of Taylor Byas

Taylor Byas, *I Done Clicked My Heels Three Times*, Soft Skull Press

Dr. Taylor Byas, PhD, is a Black Chicago native currently living in Cincinnati, Ohio. She is a features editor for *The Rumpus*, an acquisitions poetry editor for *Variant Literature*, a member of the *Beloit Poetry Journal* editorial board, and a 2023-24 National Book Critics Emerging Fellow. She is also a coeditor of *The Southern Poetry Anthology, Vol X: Alabama* and the young adult anthology *Poemhood: Our Black Revival*. Her debut full-length poetry collection, *I Done Clicked My Heels Three Times*, won the 2023 Maya Angelou Book Award, the 2023 Chicago Review of Books Award in Poetry, and was named a 2024 Honor Book for Best Poetry by the Black Caucus of the American Library Association. Her second full-length poetry collection, *Resting Bitch Face*, is forthcoming in 2025.

I Done Clicked My Heels Three Times takes its inspiration and concept from the classic film *The Wiz* to explore a Black woman's journey out of the South Side of Chicago and into adulthood. The narrative arc of *The Wiz* serves as a loose trajectory for this collection, pulling readers through an abandoned barn, a Wendy's drive-thru, a Beyoncé video, Grandma's house, Sunday service, and the corner store. At every stop, the speaker is made to confront her womanhood, her sexuality, the visibility of her body, alcoholism in her family, and various ways in which narratives are imposed on her.

ABOUT OHIO OR AN OHIOAN

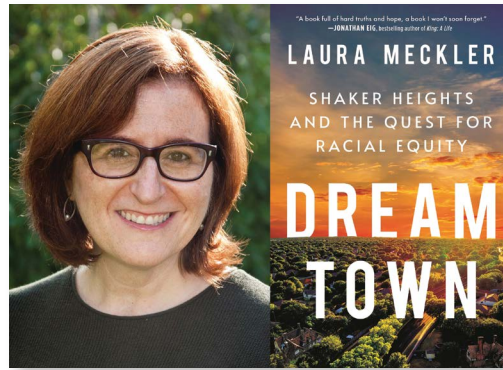


Photo by Jeanne Van Atta

Laura Meckler, *Dream Town: Shaker Heights and the Quest for Racial Equity*, Henry Holt and Company

Laura Meckler is a national education writer for the *Washington Post* where she covers education across the country, as well as national education policy and politics. She previously reported on the White House, presidential politics, immigration, and healthcare for the *Wall Street Journal*, as well as health and social policy for the *Associated Press*. Her honors include a Nieman Fellowship and Livingston Award for National Reporting, and she was part of a team that won the George Polk Award for Justice Reporting. A native of Shaker Heights, Ohio, Meckler now lives in Washington, DC, with her husband and two sons.

Dream Town is a searing and intimate examination of the ideals and realities of racial integration. Meckler tells the story of a decades-long pursuit in Shaker Heights, Ohio, uncovering the roadblocks that have threatened progress time and again—in housing, in education, and in the promise of shared community. In telling the stories of the Shakerites who have built and lived in this community, Meckler asks: What will it take to fulfill the promise of racial integration in America? What compromises are people of all races willing to make? What does success look like, and has Shaker Heights achieved it? The result is a complex and masterfully reported portrait of a place that, while never perfect, has achieved more than most, and a road map for communities that seek to do the same.

MIDDLE GRADE & YOUNG ADULT LITERATURE

JUVENILE LITERATURE

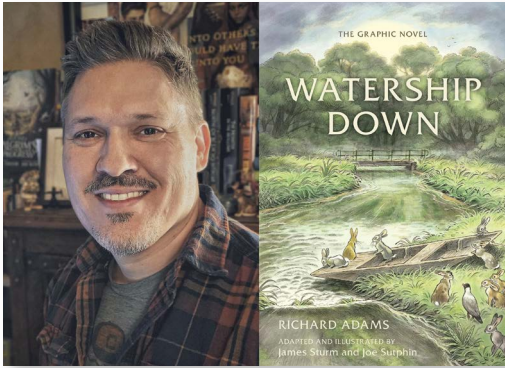


Photo courtesy of Joe Sutphin

Joe Sutphin, *Watership Down* (written by Richard Adams, adapted by James Sturm), Ten Speed Graphic

Joe Sutphin is an Eisner Award–winning illustrator of books for young readers including the *New York Times*–bestselling *Word of Mouse* by James Patterson, Andrew Peterson’s Wingfeather Saga series, the newly-envisioned edition of John Bunyan’s *Little Pilgrim’s Progress*, and the official graphic novelization of Richard Adams’ timeless novel *Watership Down*. His love of nature, and of the living creatures in the fields and woods around his home, has informed his art for much of his life. Sutphin lives in a barn in central Ohio with his wife and cats.

Watership Down is a classic tale of survival, hope, courage, and friendship that has delighted and inspired readers around the world for more than fifty years. This graphic novel adaptation will charm original fans and enchant new ones, with gorgeous illustrations that capture the imaginations of readers of all ages. Set in England’s Downs, a once-idyllic rural landscape, this stirring tale follows a band of special creatures on their flight from the intrusion of man and the certain destruction of their home. Led by Hazel and Fiver, a stouthearted pair of rabbit brothers, they journey from their native Sandleford Warren, through the harrowing trials posed by predators and adversaries, and toward the dream of a mysterious promised land and a more perfect society.

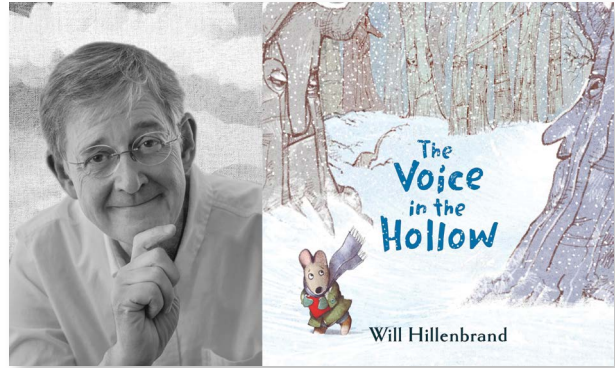


Photo by Ian Hillenbrand

Will Hillenbrand, *The Voice in the Hollow*, Holiday House

Will Hillenbrand is a renowned author and illustrator of over seventy-eight children’s books. His titles include the Big Bear series, Bear and Mole series, and Mighty Reader series. Hillenbrand’s books have won numerous awards including the Society of Illustrators Gold Medal, Children’s Choice Awards, ALA Notable Books, and a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County. In addition to writing and illustrating books, Hillenbrand has served as the Author and Illustrator in Residence at Kent State University and the Art Academy of Cincinnati. Hillenbrand grew up in Cincinnati and currently lives in Terrace Park, Ohio.

The Voice in the Hollow follows young mouse Hubert on a fantastical journey. When a blizzard closes the library early, Hubert takes a shortcut home through the spooky Hollow. Just as Hubert is gathering his nerve to press on, a mysterious guardian appears and offers to take his paw. Together, they journey through the snow, an ominous forest, and over the dangerous mountains. Hidden in the terrain are scenes that evoke myths of the origins of Earth’s mysterious features. In a stunning double gatefold, sleeping bears spring to life, setting off a landslide. Just as Hubert reaches the safety of home, he turns to find his guide has disappeared. Who—or what—helped him through the Hollow?

Congratulations also to the 2024 Ohio Book Award Finalists! These books have appeared on numerous bestseller lists, and the writers and illustrators have won many prestigious literary awards. All have made an impact on the literary life of Ohio, and we are proud to support their work. Look for these titles at your local library or bookstore.

FICTION

Cunningham, Michael. *Day*, Random House
 Hyde, Allegra. *The Last Catastrophe*, Vintage Books
 McDaniel, Tiffany. *On the Savage Side*, Knopf
 Thai, Thao. *Banyan Moon*, Mariner Books
 Umrigar, Thrity. *The Museum of Failures*,
 Algonquin Books

NONFICTION

Dawidziak, Mark. *A Mystery of Mysteries: The Death and Life of Edgar Allan Poe*, St. Martin's Press
 Gay, Ross. *The Book of (More) Delights*, Algonquin Books
 Judd, Robin. *Between Two Worlds: Jewish War Brides After the Holocaust*, The University of North Carolina Press
 Smith, Maggie. *You Could Make This Place Beautiful*, Atria Books

POETRY

Glaser, Elton. *Ghost Variations*, University of Pittsburgh Press
 Hessenauer, Anita M. *Let Go*, Resource Publications
 Reeves, Phoebe. *Helen of Bikini*, Lily Poetry Review Press
 Robinson, Nicole. *Without a Field Guide*, Unbound Edition Press
 Stephens, Dior J. *CRUEL/CRUEL*, Nightboat Books

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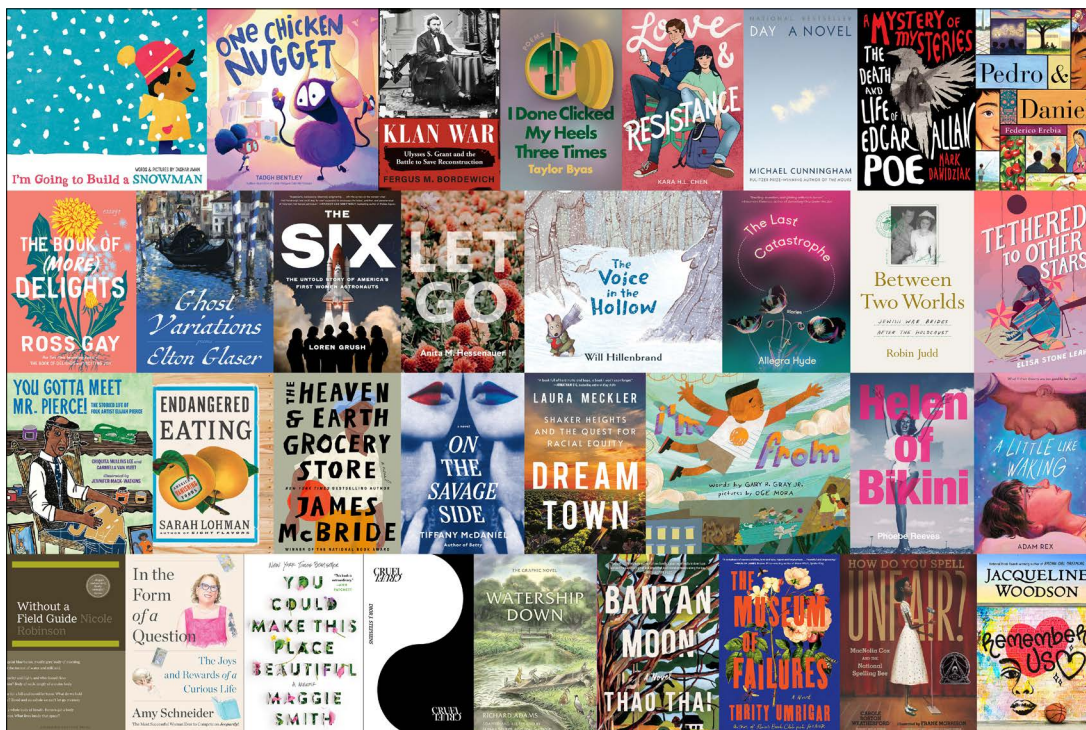
Bordewich, Fergus M. *Klan War: Ulysses S. Grant and the Battle to Save Reconstruction*, Knopf
 Grush, Loren. *The Six: The Untold Story of America's First Women Astronauts*, Scribner
 Schneider, Amy. *In the Form of a Question: The Joys and Rewards of a Curious Life*, Avid Reader Press
 Weatherford, Carole Boston. Illus. by Frank Morrison. *How Do You Spell Unfair?: MacNolia Cox and the National Spelling Bee*, Candlewick

MIDDLE GRADE & YOUNG ADULT LITERATURE

Chen, Kara H. L. *Love & Resistance*, Quill Tree Books
 Erebia, Federico. *Pedro & Daniel*, Levine Querido
 Leahy, Elisa Stone. *Tethered to Other Stars*, Quill Tree Books
 Rex, Adam. *A Little Like Waking*, Roaring Brook Press
 Woodson, Jacqueline. *Remember Us*, Nancy Paulsen Books

JUVENILE LITERATURE

Awan, Jashar. *I'm Going to Build a Snowman*, Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers
 Bentley, Tadgh. *One Chicken Nugget*, Balzer + Bray
 Gray, Gary R. Illus. by Oge Mora. *I'm From*, Balzer + Bray
 Lee, Chiquita Mullins, and Carmella Van Vleet. Illus. by Jennifer Mack-Watkins. *You Gotta Meet Mr. Pierce! The Storied Life of Folk Artist Elijah Pierce*, Kokila



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Minister Creek

Sienna Zeilinger, 2024 Walter Rumsey Marvin Grant Winner

One August morning, shortly after my sister, Amanda, turned twenty, I steered our blue Volkswagen into the Allegheny National Forest. I'd planned an excursion into the wilderness, just the two of us, to be followed by cheeseburgers at a drive-in on the way home; I'd done some light googling and found the #1-rated day hike in the Allegheny. Minister Creek, it was called. I didn't tell anyone where we were going. The trail was only rated moderate. I meant the day to be a gift.

At the trailhead, Mand stretched while I double-checked the map on my phone, a service bar winking in and out. We were in the right place, though ours was the only car in sight. I'd felt a little silly driving three hours one way for what couldn't be more than a three-hour stroll, so I'd packed PB&J's and a couple of apples for us to munch before we reached the Minister Creek Scenic Overlook five miles in. Mand is a photographer, and from the pictures I'd found online, the scenic overlook promised color, perspective, a treetop carpet. We had zip in our step when we set off.

When Mand was in fifth grade and I was in ninth, we walked the two miles to school together in half an hour, an iPod Nano in my pocket and each of us claiming an earbud, craning our necks toward each other and synchronizing our steps to Arcade Fire or the Who. Now, we suspect our four-year age difference is why we're so close: we never shared the same age group for an activity, were never tethered together, in other words, so we got to choose each other, the way friends do. The shared earbuds and our frustration at having to adjust to each other's pace prompted, really, some of our only moments of curtness toward each other. And still we set off each morning yoked like that.

On the way home, we'd play Name That Tune, taking turns tapping out the beat of a song with a branch on the sidewalk. We found that if we stared really hard at each other beforehand, we could usually guess correctly by

the end of the first measure. It's less sameness and more synchrony. We often, out of nowhere, sigh at the same time. We are a holy terror at Pictionary. During the years we lived apart, the thing I savored most about reuniting was walking quietly together, after we'd caught up and I'd re-memorized the shape of her shadow next to mine, when every muscle taut from just the ordinary exertion of being in the world would relax, and I could bask in the relief of being so deeply known that I didn't have to say anything.

As well as a trail, Minister Creek is a campground, the Allegheny's smallest. Six campsites run along the west bank of the creek, each with a fire pit ringed by trodden earth. The sign on the way in asks families to pay a twelve-dollar fee per night. There were no families, nor any of the typical detritus of families, at the campground. We reveled in our solitude, the surroundings so still we could hear the leaves grazing the backs of their neighbors.

And then we passed a man and woman, clad in matching overalls, at the end of the campsites. Mand saw them first, and I followed her gaze to where they stood at a nondescript shed, the man balanced on a ladder, both of them returning our stare. They appeared to be in the middle of painting the shed a garish and official-looking shade of chartreuse. They had stopped their work to look at us, and the paint dripped from their brushes. I waved, Mand offered a quiet *hi*, and they nodded once in unison before turning back to their task.

The campground abutted a clearing, and our path wended through it and into the forest. A pair of oaks at the border could have been someone's portico, and we laughed as we ushered each other through, as though arriving at the same time to a party. Leaves caked the dirt; fall had begun while I wasn't paying attention. And then the ground turned downward and we burst through the trees into an ocean of ferns, whispering like

a cornfield. I kept turning around to see if there was a squirrel or a fox or something else following us. There was not.

The ferns were Jurassic—the size of our forearms. Interrupted only by the stripes of peeling oak trunks, the green stretched on for what seemed like miles, like hours. The sun poked through above us in merely lighter emerald. The ground below was visible only when you brushed aside the ferns at your hips. Mand spun in a slow circle, her mouth a big mock O, her tie-dyed T-shirt an aberrant splash of purple, her ponytail buoyant. I took pictures of her spinning. She took pictures of me marveling. I felt somehow both great and small.

The trail being named what it is, the creek shouldn't have surprised us, but still it did somehow, its trickle ringing out far away until suddenly we were right on top of it. It was shallower than I expected, unassuming, though rolling fast. We crossed it without incident or fanfare. I was anticipating a log or something more rustic, but we took a bridge. Of course there was a bridge—they were expecting visitors here, I had to remember.

Minister Creek is located in the northwest tip of the Northern Unglaciaded Allegheny Plateau, the ecological subregion that was spared the geological injustice of being plowed over by the Laurentide Ice Sheet between twenty thousand and ninety-five thousand years ago. The Laurentide Ice Sheet gouged out the Great Lakes and flattened the upper Midwest. Compared to the topographically starved walks of northeast Ohio, Minister Creek is rugged enough to lend itself to a day hike, but close enough to the ghost of the Laurentide that its ridges never quite sharpened. New Englanders would call it pretty flat. Incidentally, on its website, the Forest Service calls it difficult, and three times gently warns that the trail “offers challenges to a wide range of skill levels,” which probably would have affected our plans had I bothered to do anything more than give Minister Creek a quick google ahead of time.

Faded yellow blazes on the oaks guided us northward and upward. To our left was the creek, though we were quickly too high to see it through the trees that bloomed below us. To our right, a bulwark of oaks stood at attention. We followed the trampled ground close to the bluff's edge, casting about for the blazes every few minutes.

Occasionally the brush to our left—because there was now brush to our left, barricading us from the edge—would clear for a moment, and we'd pass a smooth rock jutting out: the perfect spot for a small animal to perch for a nice lunch. I envisioned a squirrel with a miniature PB&J sandwich, a tiny drawstring bag on its back, overlooking the valley, defenseless, oblivious to its place in the scale and order of things. Mand found us an excellent ledge, and we pulled out our sandwiches and sat with our ankles dangling over the trees.

Either a branch snapped, or I thought a branch snapped. Mand said she didn't hear anything.

“I wonder,” she said instead, “how many people are also out here today.”

We were quiet. I'd completely forgotten that there could be others, could be somebody. Could be nobody. A realization burrowed in, that I didn't know which I'd rather see. I gazed out at the valley and felt my stomach swim and still.

I peeked at Mand squinting past her glasses, and when she turned to meet my eyes, I looked down at my lap and stood up and brushed the crumbs off my shorts.

“Let's go!” I chirped, adding a hollow exclamation point, like you might if you were trying to prevent a dog from sensing your own fear or dismay. A futile thing to do, but if you love the dog, there you go, trying anyway.

Away from the ledge, leaves choked the sky. Mand nearly stepped on a snake. But it was just a garter, and we let it pass before we continued up the slope toward a cluster of grassy mounds. What looked like knolls were in fact enormous boulders, tiny islands three times our height and swathed in moss, a game of marbles God had abandoned. Mand and I each rushed toward a different boulder and threw ourselves into orbit around it, calling to each other, echolocating between the stones.

The last surviving scrap of the Laurentide Ice Sheet is a glacier called the Barnes Ice Cap, which is the shape of a blunted arrowhead and the size of Delaware. It's located 1,200 miles north of Quebec as the crow flies, or rather, as he refuses to, and who can blame him? It's not like there's much room anyway. The Barnes Ice Cap is 1,600 feet thick, about the size of One World Trade Center. In

the last few decades, it's been losing three feet of itself each year. In 300 years, it'll be gone.

Back when the Laurentide was the size of a continent, it plucked igneous rocks from the Canadian Shield, swept them along, and left them behind at its edges: the boulders we saw likely originated in Quebec. "What's this one like?" asked Mand, pointing at the rock to my right. "You climb it?"

I looked up at the stone, and it was a stranger. I circled it and considered. I put my palm on the moss, testing for familiarity. It felt as cool and soft as the moss on any other rock, or maybe as cool and soft as itself. To my left, another stone, or the same one, and beyond, more, impossibly old and impossibly new.

Had it crossed my mind to open myself up to omens, I might have suspected something was up when we got off I-80 and passed Blood Road. Or when we turned onto Route 666. But these aren't signposts of actual danger. The real trouble is where Minister Creek's path forks and connects to the North County Trail, heading very much not toward your parked car but rather toward Vermont, and the particular trouble for us was that I now realized I did not know where that happened. The path twists up on itself enough that a simple compass won't help you sync up with it, and the path had disappeared some time ago.

The trees bent erratically. I needed a drink of water. When had I last heard the creek? I needed to look at our map. I rooted around in my backpack. I felt Mand's gaze. Our map depicted, at the fork, a pile of boulders. We were in the middle of a titanic pile of boulders. Was there a cairn somewhere? Were we in the middle of a warning, or had we not arrived there yet?

I had told nobody where we were going—or even that we were going. Our spare water was back in the car. We were beyond cell service, had no radio, no first-aid kit. I saw, out of the corner of my eye, Mand begin to spin.

"Don't do that," I barked, surprising myself with my own harshness. I tried to soften my voice, stared at the map instead of at her. "It's dangerous."

My correction had the opposite effect, planting a seed instead of smoothing over, and Mand cocked her head.

"Dangerous how?"

Silence stretched around us, and my mental map unfurled with it. I squinted. All I saw was ferns from here to Burlington. Worst-case scenarios emerged as fast as I could imagine them: We might get hungry. We might get hurt. I thought of the couple painting the shed, the way they'd clocked us and said nothing, how they were the only people in the world with any knowledge of where we were. How, more likely, they weren't thinking about us at all. How we might be getting further and further away from any promise of being found.

I forced myself to speak slower than my heartbeat, to channel nonchalance. "Do you happen to remember which way we came from? Before the rocks?"

Mand looked around. She'd screwed her mouth up into her left cheek, her thinking face since forever. The lighter hair around her temples had come loose from her ponytail. When she turned to me, her face was the searching one she'd worn as a kid in my bedroom doorway, fresh from a nightmare, asking if she could crawl into my bed. She said, "I'm not actually sure," and I remembered the soles of her feet, cold from padding across the wood floor, pressing into my calves. I couldn't tell whether her devastation was merely from not knowing, or from having trusted me, the one who was supposed to know and did not.

My earliest memory of Mand is teaching her to smile, both of us crouching between the back of the couch and the wall of our apartment. I was grinning, and then she was, and then I was, and that was it—it turned out a person could be at once a fount of their own joy and an echo of yours, and it turned out you could find that person behind the couch or sharing your bathtub or just generally on your heels for as long as you'd have them.

Like most twentysomethings, I'd had practice building an identity through concealment, brightening parts of myself in some crowds and dimming them elsewhere. I'd done this with parents, partners, strangers, acquaintances, friends. With Mand, though, whenever I'd wondered what to feel or how to be, she was already there, mirroring, magnifying. I was suddenly able to see why one might want to brick oneself off from the person one cares about most. I had no idea how to go about doing so. I felt horrified to try.

Most siblings I know would be better in this moment. Most siblings I know have practice hiding behind the wall they've built between each other, or at least taking a short moment to lean against it out of sight. When a joke at her expense has landed a little too sharply, my friend lobs barbs at her sister to buy time to get her bearings. Another friend is out to his sister but not to his brother. These barriers aren't useless; they help you figure out how to walk alone.

Our mom's youngest sister has had a brain tumor for decades. The tumor is benign but takes up valuable space. It flares up every so often, responds well to treatment, and recedes. Years after our hike, the tumor's composition will change, and it will become less that our aunt has cancer, and more that the cancer has her, and when that happens, it will be like disregarding the weather forecast and getting caught in a downpour and having nowhere to shout your indignance but up. Our mom will be soaked through to her bones.

This may not be what happens to Mand and me. But something will happen—maybe even something beautiful—and we'll resurface just a little farther away from one another.

On the trail, we circled each other, trying to discern from which way we'd come. We decided to descend the hill, and a few minutes in, I listened hard to the wind and caught the rush of the creek. I swallowed my relief so it didn't escape in my voice when I told Mand, but the triumph burst out anyway.

"It's on our left! We're facing the way we were when we started walking!"

"Should we keep going?" Mand asked, and I realized that I'd been wrong: she hadn't wanted to go back like I did. She'd been trying to tell which way was onward.

A gasp, a sound like ice calving, knocked free from my lungs. I cleaved in both senses: I split open, I reached for. I composed myself. I said, "I think we go back."

Mand's face was illegible to me. "Okay," she said.

We carefully turned and restarted our walk, boulders at our backs. We kept the creek on our right, and eventually the ground smoothed, the leaves under our shoes

flattened, and we were back on the established path. We passed our sandwich rock and traipsed further down the hill, picking up speed, both of us pretending that it was gravity making us faster. By the time we reached the ferns we were undeniably running, tearing through the green, Mand's back a violet swirl ahead, and my heart pounded, and I was no longer interested in pretending that what I was feeling was something small, and I overtook her without reservation and hurtled across the clearing, past the shed, through the empty campsite. I sprinted until I could see our car's discordant blue, a blaze of our own making, marking the exact place and moment when we would be assuredly alongside each other, hurrying to strap ourselves in, Mand wide-eyed and telling me *We can go* with a raw insistence, and in that hoarseness I'd know that she was all the way here with me, and I would say—I would lie—to both of us: we won't have to go down a path like this again for as long as we want.

Originally published in *The Cincinnati Review* Issue 19.2



Photo courtesy of Sienna Zeilinger

Sienna Zeilinger is from Cleveland and now lives in Philadelphia. Her writing has appeared in *CutBank*, *Passages North*, *Real Life*, and elsewhere. Sienna's work has been supported by the Bread Loaf Writers' Conference and recognized with *The Florida Review* Editors Prize in Creative Nonfiction. She is an editor at *Alien Magazine* and *Autofocus* and a recent graduate of the MFA Program at Rutgers University-Camden. You can find more of her work at siennazwrites.com.

A MONUMENT TO INSPIRATION: UNVEILING THE ROD SERLING MEMORIAL STATUE

By Mark Dawidziak

Recreation Park in Binghamton, New York, was packed on September 15, 2024, with fans of Rod Serling and *The Twilight Zone*. They had traveled from twenty-five states and five countries to witness the unveiling of a six-foot statue of the renowned *Twilight Zone* creator.

The culmination of a four-year effort by the Rod Serling Memorial Foundation, the larger-than-life statue depicts Serling in an iconic narration pose familiar to fans of his landmark fantasy anthology series *The Twilight Zone* (1959–64). The bronzed figure of the celebrated writer stands in front of a door inscribed with words from one of his *Twilight Zone* openings: “You unlock this door with the key of imagination.”

Serling was born on December 25, 1924. The statue was unveiled during the Serling centennial year as the grand finale of the Rod Serling Memorial Foundation’s annual SerlingFest in the writer’s hometown of Binghamton, New York. Although born in Syracuse, Serling grew up in Binghamton and always considered it his hometown. “Everybody has to have a hometown,” the six-time Emmy-winning writer said. “Binghamton’s mine.” That quote is inscribed on the statue’s pedestal.

The site of the statue in Recreation Park held great significance to Serling. The eighteen-acre park opened in 1925, just months after his birth. Located a few blocks from his boyhood home, the park became a fixture of his childhood. It also inspired the *Twilight Zone* episode “Walking Distance” and other nostalgia-tinged work. In addition to the statue, the park is the home of a carousel

decorated with scenes from classic *Twilight Zone* stories and a bandstand with a plaque honoring Serling.

Anne Serling, a Foundation board member and author of the memoir *As I Knew Him: My Dad, Rod Serling*, recalls her father’s love of visiting Binghamton and walking the streets of his childhood. “He would drive by his house on Bennett Avenue and make his way here to Recreation Park, sit on the bench, and watch the merry-go-round. It seems only fitting that the statue would be erected here.”

“Binghamton was the center of his universe and the starting gate for his creativity,” Rod’s oldest daughter, Jodi Serling, said before the unveiling. “So, it’s clearly appropriate that my dad’s statue stand here, representing his love and dedication to the town in which he grew up.”



New York assemblywoman Donna Lupardo, long a proponent of the Foundation’s endeavors, helped secure a \$50,000 New York state grant to fund the effort. A 2023 Kickstarter campaign raised more than \$42,000, and additional funds for the project—which cost approximately \$140,000 total—were raised through private donations.

“My whole world view has been shaped by *The Twilight Zone* and his important works,” Lupardo said of Serling.

During the dedication ceremony, the Foundation formally gifted the statue to the city of Binghamton. “We are eternally grateful,” Binghamton Mayor Jared Kraham said. “The statue is as much about celebrating a

key figure in Binghamton's history as it is about inspiring the future generations of storytellers, innovators, and difference makers."

New York isn't the only state where Serling left his mark. He also spent eight formative years in Ohio.

At age eighteen, Serling enlisted in the military, serving as an Army paratrooper during World War II. After the war, he enrolled at Antioch College in Yellow Springs, Ohio, in 1946. It was at Antioch that Serling discovered his love of writing—and met the love of his life, Carolyn "Carol" Kramer. The couple married as students in 1948.

Following graduation from Antioch in 1950, Serling worked at radio and television stations in Cincinnati. During this period, he also began selling scripts to national television shows, commuting between Ohio and New York until he and Carol moved to Connecticut in 1954. Their alma mater brought them back to Ohio again in 1962, when Serling returned to Antioch as a writer-in-residence and teacher.

Ohioans are excited to honor Serling's connection to the Buckeye State in 2025 with a new Ohio Historical Marker at Antioch College. Approved by the state this summer, the two-sided marker will tell visitors about "Rod Serling at Antioch College" and "Rod Serling Television Pioneer." It will also commemorate Serling's addition to the Ohio Literary Trail, the Ohioana Library's program which charts the state's rich literary heritage.

"Among its many distinguished alumni, Rod Serling was probably Antioch College's most famous graduate," Antioch College archivist Scott Sanders said. "To

him, Antioch was 'a very special place which made the assumption of maturity on my part,' but provided freedom and just enough structure that allowed him to explore his interests."

"One of the sad ironies of Rod Serling's life may have been that he never fully appreciated the magnitude of the moments he left behind," said Nicholas Parisi, president of the Rod Serling Memorial Foundation board.



The forthcoming Ohio Historical Marker at Antioch College and its inclusion in the Ohio Literary Trail will ensure that Rod Serling's moments in Ohio will be appreciated and celebrated for generations to come.

Special thanks to Mark Dawidziak for his contributions to the Ohioana Quarterly's year-long celebration of the 100th anniversary of Rod Serling's birth. Dawidziak is the author or editor of twenty-five books, including Everything I Need to Know I Learned in The Twilight Zone. A board member of the Rod Serling Memorial Foundation, he spent forty years as a TV and film critic at the Akron Beacon Journal and Cleveland's The Plain Dealer. For additional reading on Serling's connections to Ohio, be sure to check out Dawidziak's article "Rod Serling: Submitted for Your Appreciation" in our winter 2024 Ohioana Quarterly.

Photos: (Left) Serling fans check out the tribute to the *Twilight Zone* creator in the lobby of Binghamton's Broome County Forum Theatre. (Above) The new memorial statue of Rod Serling in Binghamton's Recreation Park. Photos courtesy of Mark Dawidziak.

Book Reviews

NONFICTION

Capuzza, Jamie C. *The Fifth Star: Ohio's Fight for Women's Right to Vote*.

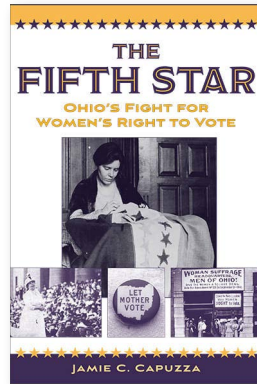
Kent, OH: The Kent State University Press, 2023.

Dr. Jamie C. Capuzza's *The Fifth Star: Ohio's Fight for Women's Right to Vote* documents the seventy-year struggle for women's suffrage in the Buckeye State, and the women who fought fiercely and tirelessly to gain that right.

Published by The Kent State University Press, Capuzza has written a book that is both scholarly and fun to read. She includes extensive endnotes, which contribute to the caliber of the scholarship without distracting from the reading experience. She draws on both modern research and historical primary documents, including numerous quotes that let the women of the movement speak for themselves.

Capuzza takes readers through the Ohio women's suffrage movement chronologically: starting with its inception in the Antebellum period, through the Reconstruction era and the Gilded Age, and into the Progressive Age of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Throughout, Capuzza introduces the main characters of the movement, providing biographies of the women (and men) who campaigned for female suffrage, both locally and nationally. While the book focuses on securing the right to vote, Capuzza also discusses how other women's rights were part of the suffrage movement—including property rights, labor protections for children and women, access to contraception and reproductive health services, and the ability to serve on library and school boards (in contrast to political office).

Capuzza does an excellent job of discussing the larger social landscape and the effects it had on the suffrage movement. She clearly lays out the tensions between the nascent female suffrage movement and abolitionists



during the Antebellum and Reconstruction periods. While many activists at the time recognized the linked nature of oppression and fought for the vote for all Americans, some suffragists and abolitionists worried that campaigning for universal suffrage would detract from their cause; others were, simply, sexist and/or racist. Capuzza also discusses how, especially in the late nineteenth century, suffragists found common cause with the Temperance movement—another social cause where women were afforded a modicum of political pull due to their perception as the “moral sex.” Throughout it all, Capuzza shows the importance of grassroots organizing, and the support that was provided by state- and nation-wide organizations, while also discussing how ideological differences between and within organizations affected the larger effort.

Despite the long and lively history of activism in Ohio, women did not gain the right to vote in political elections across the state until Ohio ratified the Nineteenth Amendment in 1919—the fifth state to do so.

With her clear, well-researched writing, Capuzza keeps readers engaged through the victories and (many, many) losses that Ohio suffragists experienced. With historical anecdotes and quotes, she brings levity and interest to a story that could otherwise feel textbook-boring. The conclusion discusses women in politics since the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment, including those first brave women (like Ohioan Virginia Darlington Greene in 1922) who ran for office. She also calls attention to the struggles for suffrage that continue today, as states across the country enact increasingly restrictive voting-rights laws.

As a comprehensive narrative history, this book is appropriate for a wide range of audiences, from college professors and students to amateur history buffs or those interested in feminist history.

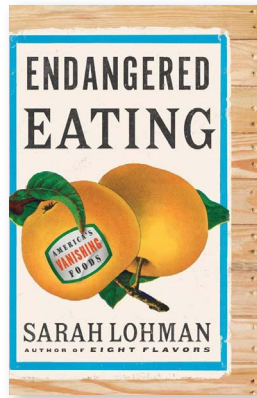
I would argue *The Fifth Star* is a must-read in today's political landscape—a reminder of how far we have come, and how hard we must continue to fight for suffrage and equal rights for all Americans.

REVIEWED BY CHARLOTTE HOUGHTON, LIBRARIAN,
COLUMBUS, OH

Lohman, Sarah. *Endangered Eating: America's Vanishing Foods*.

New York, NY: W. W. Norton & Company, 2023.

At age sixteen, Sarah Lohman of rural Medina County took work as a first-person interpreter on a nineteenth-century replica Ohio farmstead. For four summers, she wore the clothes of the era, did the chores, and stoked the flames of a wood fire over which she cooked food using authentic recipes. It turned out to be much more than performance for pay. Sarah found her calling and with it, a vision for a career as a culinary historian—preserving food history and unearthing recipes, then bringing them to life to inform the present.



In the two decades since earning her bachelor of fine arts degree at Cleveland Institute of Art, Lohman has been a whirlwind of action, creating programming for the immigrant-migrant experiential Tenement Museum on NYC's Lower East Side, then freelance designing and delivering tastings, makings, and lectures around the country. And she writes. The blog *Four Pounds Flour* (2006-2018) and its focus on “rethinking historical cuisine” led to publisher Simon & Schuster soliciting her debut book, *Eight Flavors: The Untold Story of American Cuisine* (2016).

From those eight widely recognized flavors, Lohman turned her gaze to eight foods that teeter on the cusp of being lost resources. Barely produced or utilized today, the fear is that they are edging toward becoming memories in museums, or curiosities in zoos, or relegated to deep freeze seed vaults. *Endangered Eating: America's Vanishing Foods* is the story of Lohman's journey to learn about these endangered edibles.

Niche variety dates in the Coachella Valley. Hawaiian legacy sugarcane (kupuna kō). Diné (Navajo) Churro sheep. Salmon fishing with reeffnets (sxwo'le) in the Puget Sound. Anishinaabe manoomin, the grain of *Zizania palustris*, imprecisely called wild rice. Heirloom cider apples. Kombo hakshish (Choctaw filé powder), ground from sassafras leaves. Carolina African runner peanuts, the “ancestral peanut” of North America.

Dates, sugarcane, sheep, salmon, wild rice, apples, gumbo seasoning, and peanuts. So ordinary, yet far from ordinary in their tastes and their cultural significances. They are among 350 food resources vanishing in the United States, and over 5,000 internationally, that have found advocates for their survival and been onboarded by Slow Food International to its Ark of Taste.

Endangered Eating is the work of five years. Lohman first chased eight harvests from February to November of 2019, braving the elements and getting her hands sticky, or bloody, or dirty to experience how these foods are gathered and consumed in the moment. Marshalling her first-hand involvement and interviews with deep research of historical records, she unwraps a nigh-unto-unfathomable web of issues and dynamics that differently impede survival of these edibles.

Lohman's adventure to far-flung locales, notably, begins in Ohio and her small garden, includes a detour to the Mentor Marsh preserve of Ohio, and ends in the presence of Buckeye chickens on exhibition in Ohio.

As the harvests unfold, so too does her introspection. Is it appropriate, she asks, for Hawaii's legacy sugarcane to make a product that came from its colonizers, and an expensive, luxury alcohol at that? The “eat it to save it” mantra perplexes as she confronts the reality that Carolina African runner peanuts in the hands of high-end chefs are miles removed from the people who grew them for basic sustenance.

If all of this sounds like a lot to bite off and chew, it is. Lohman's prose is direct and clear, devoid of foodie jargon and cant. Her documentation does not impede the flow, but is instead offered up in forty-two dense pages with index. Each of the eight stories is an essay in itself, one that can be read and referenced without depending upon any other. But, to read them sequentially is to better understand the overarching story and its conundrums.

The grace notes in Lohman's stories are the moments that capture the sacred.

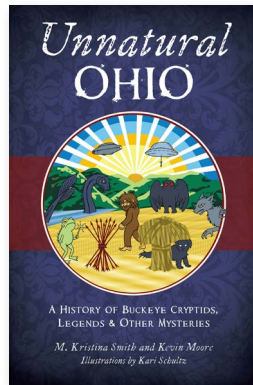
“This animal that was once a separate being, looking at me over the truck gate, would be transformed into a part of me,” she writes on page 70, moved by the ritual of the Navajo-Churro's harvest and the prayers of thanks to Father Sky for rain and Mother Earth for food carved into the ram's carcass.

Read this book. Or listen to Sarah Lohman read the audiobook. Study it. Engage with it. It's a singular encounter with an historian so well informed, so sure of her mission, so open to experience and documenting it, and so generous in communicating it to others.

REVIEWED BY CHERIE L. BAYER, PHD, RETIRED JOURNALIST, EDITOR, AND DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR FOR AMERICAN JERSEY CATTLE ASSOCIATION, REYNOLDSBURG, OH

Smith, M. Kristina, and Kevin Moore.
Unnatural Ohio: A History of Buckeye Cryptids, Legends & Other Mysteries.
 Illus. by Kari Schultz.
 Charleston, SC: The History Press, 2023.

This book review features quotes by authors M. Kristina Smith and Kevin Moore, interviewed by book reviewer Carroll McCune at the Wood County Museum on March 14, 2024. A special thank you to Carroll for sharing this interview with Ohioana Quarterly readers!



In the late 1800s, the crew of a three-masted schooner sailing the waters of Lake Erie reported that a black shaggy dog climbed up over the rail from the water, although the animal was completely dry. It walked across the moonlit deck then jumped overboard on the other side. Not hearing a splash, the mariners ran to see what had happened to it, but there was nothing in the water. A few days later on November 19, 1881, the ship vanished in a gale near the Welland Canal, and the legend of the Black Dog of Lake Erie began—one of the local tales told in *Unnatural Ohio: A History of Buckeye Cryptids, Legends & Other Mysteries*. “The dog was believed to have been a death omen for at least three doomed ships,” said authors M. Kristina Smith and Kevin Moore.

Smith, a former investigative reporter, conducted numerous interviews and detective-like fact finding for the stories. She is the marketing and communications manager for the Rutherford B. Hayes Presidential Library & Museums in Fremont, Ohio. Moore, who is currently the institution’s curator of artifacts, took an historian’s approach, searching public records and archived materials. *Unnatural Ohio*’s sixteen-page

bibliography attests to their diligent research. According to Moore, “We wanted to leave a paper trail for any future researchers who wanted to use our book as a reference to know where we found our information.”

Unnatural Ohio begins with the ever-popular story of Bigfoot (or Sasquatch). Although the modern legend exploded in the press with the Humbolt County, California, plaster cast footprint impression in 1958, Bigfoot sightings have occurred across America. Ohio ranks fourth in the nation for the number of appearances of the wild man, with seventy-five percent of Ohio’s counties reporting sightings across the state. Salt Fork State Park in eastern Ohio, a popular site for Sasquatch sightings, is home to the annual Ohio Bigfoot Conference. In 2022, the first Hocking Hills Bigfoot Festival took place in Logan in central Ohio. Bigfoot encounters have even occurred in cities further north like Akron, where the local term “Grassman” originated after a group of sightings in the 1980s.

In 1955, in the Cincinnati suburb of Loveland near the Little Miami River, even stranger beings were seen by a “prominent businessman” who described “. . . three creatures on the side of Hopewell Road. They were three to four feet tall, and they stood up straight, on their hind legs. Their hands and feet were webbed, and they had heads and faces like frogs . . . One of them held a wand, and it shot a spray of sparks.” Seventeen years later in 1972, two police officers on separate occasions encountered a similar frog-like creature near the Little Miami River. The legend of the Loveland Frog began when ufologists started associating the spark-emitting, frog-like beings with a spate of UFO sightings in the area. The authors write in *Unnatural Ohio*, “Whether the Frogman is an alien, cryptid [creatures whose existence has never been proven] or a figment of sheer imagination, Loveland has embraced it with open arms.” Nods to the cryptid can be found in local shop Mile 42 Coffee’s Frogman latte, Hometown Café Loveland’s green-themed Frogman smoothie, and the annual Loveland Frogman Race, a triathlon that started in 2014.

The second section of *Unnatural Ohio* focuses on ghostly tales and urban legends from around the state. The authors’ diligent sleuthing led them to discover that the legend of Gore Orphanage near Vermilion—Ohio’s most popular ghost story—is almost entirely untrue. They said, “. . . the gist of the legend is that the children [of

the orphanage] died a grisly, horrifying death [in a fire] and are not enjoying a peaceful eternal rest. Those who go to the woods at night where the orphanage was hear their tortured screams for help and sometimes see their ghostly bodies wandering the woods. Others see flashes of light and return to their cars to find them dotted with tiny handprints.” But the historical facts tell a different tale about the Light and Hope Orphanage—miscalled the Gore Orphanage—and its founders, Mennonite Reverend John A. Sprunger and his wife Katharina, who were investigated for cruelty to the children in their charge. The truth of this case, beginning in 1895, reveals the social conscience of the era and is more engrossing than the fictitious ghost story.

Other famous Buckeye cryptids, urban legends, and ghost tales included in the book are the Dogman of Defiance, South Bay Bessie, the Melon Heads of Kirkland, Mothman, the Elmore Rider, and the legend of Holcomb Woods.

The two authors never actually reveal in their book whether they are themselves skeptics or believers. Smith, who wrote the chapter on Bigfoot, said, “I think there’s a slim chance that Sasquatch could be real . . . There’s so many people who come forward and say that they’ve seen it who have more to lose than to gain.”

On the other hand, Moore said, “I like to call myself an optimistic disbeliever in that I do tend to be skeptical of these things. I’d like to see better evidence of them. Oftentimes the evidence presented for them is of very poor quality, but I would really like for some of this stuff to exist. It would be really interesting if it did. I’m most inclined to think that aliens exist. There are good odds that they do exist somewhere in the universe. There’s a significant body of people observing unexplained things in the sky; enough to give me pause, at least. A lot of people tend to evangelize paranormal belief and try to prove it. Or they’re very dismissive about it, almost to the point of being mean. We don’t want to be either of those things. We wanted to be objective, but also respectful.”

While believing in Bigfoot or a sparkler-waving Frogman may be preposterous to most folks, it’s just as preposterous to not believe in the existence of extraterrestrial beings, according to Don Stevens, an astrophysicist and director of Perkins Observatory in Delaware, Ohio, quoted in chapter twelve, “The Wow! Signal.” In this chapter, Moore and Smith document

the nearly forgotten, quixotic quest of Ohio State University’s radio telescope to answer the question: Are we alone in the universe?

The last three chapters in the book, dealing with extraterrestrial life, are compelling accounts of historical, well-documented events, especially the case of Deputy Dale Spaur of Portage County. Spaur and his partner William “Barney” Neff stopped to investigate an abandoned car full of strange radio equipment when they were stunned by an intense light from a dome-shaped metallic object hovering overhead. Spaur radioed his supervisor and soon a convoy of nine police cruisers were chasing a flying saucer across the state, from Akron into Pennsylvania, at speeds of 103 miles per hour, covering a distance of eighty-six miles on Sunday, April 17, 1966. After the event, Spaur testified to newspapers and to Project Blue Book at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Dayton. He was ridiculed and told that what he chased was the planet Venus, a weather balloon, or an Echo satellite. This government censure—or cover-up of their own experimental aircraft—destroyed his career and ruined his personal life.

Moore acknowledged, “What happened to Dale Spaur is more interesting than the actual encounter itself . . . It’s really sad what happened to that man, as well as the other witnesses. One guy moved across the country and changed his name because of the ridicule. I think that the human element of how people are treated when they say they’ve seen something strange is really important. That’s why we’ve dedicated our book to the people who have seen something strange and were brave enough to talk about it.”

The two authors haven’t experienced any negative feedback themselves for reporting the fantastical stories and historical facts. Moore continued, “There’s been a lot of support both from paranormal enthusiasts that were happy that we took this respectful tone and even from non-believers who have told us, ‘We really don’t believe in this, but the stories are very interesting.’”

Smith agrees with Salt Fork State Park naturalist John Hickenbottom, whom the authors quote: “I think having that mystery out there fascinates people and comforts people. We still need mysteries.”

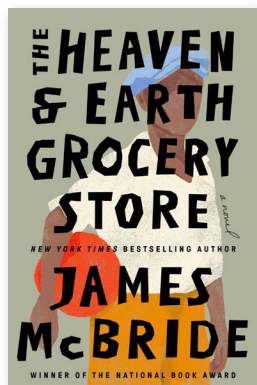
REVIEWED BY CARROLL MCCUNE, ART AND FILM CRITIC FOR THE *BG INDEPENDENT NEWS*, BOWLING GREEN, OH

FICTION

McBride, James. *The Heaven and Earth Grocery Store*.

New York, NY: Riverhead Books, 2023.

James McBride, the 2013 National Book Award winner for *The Good Lord Bird*, has written another award-winning, bestselling novel in *The Heaven and Earth Grocery Store*. Its accolades include winning the 2024 Library of Congress Prize for American Fiction; being named a best book of the year by *NPR/Fresh Air*, *Washington Post*, *The New Yorker*, and *TIME Magazine*; and winning the 2024 Ohio Book Award for fiction.



The book opens in 1972, when a developer begins digging up a lot in the Chicken Hill neighborhood in Pottstown, Pennsylvania. State troopers find a skeleton at the bottom of an old well near the development. This mystery is the throughline in the story, which travels back in time to the 1930s. The Chicken Hill neighborhood is comprised of Jewish immigrants and African Americans, along with other immigrant communities living side by side. The reader meets main characters Moshe and Chona Ludlow. Chona runs the Heaven & Earth Grocery Store, while Moshe is a Jewish theater manager. The grocery store is the lifeblood of the community and Chona’s kindness is legendary: she serves her neighbors whether they can pay or not. Chona also convinces Moshe to desegregate his theater so their African American neighbors can attend and share in the experience.

Another central character is Dodo, a Black orphaned deaf boy. He is the nephew of Nate Timblin, the Black janitor at Moshe’s theater and unofficial leader of the community. Dodo is beloved by all of his neighbors, who watch out for him and keep him safe. Then the local doctor and KKK leader, Doc Roberts, determines that Dodo is “feeble-minded” and needs to be sent to a special state school. This institution would be a far worse option for Dodo than living in Chicken Hill with his neighbors taking care of him, so the community takes matters into its own hands.

The main plot is joined by chapters that introduce several additional colorful characters in the community. The reader learns their stories, their secrets and hopes, and the breadth of struggles and marginalizations they face. But ultimately, the reader sees how an unlikely band of people unite to stand up to institutional interference. The big surprise is how the mystery of the skeleton unravels at the end in a very satisfying conclusion.

In *The Heaven & Earth Grocery Store*, McBride weaves an inspiring tale of friendship, support, and community that demonstrates the unlimited power of people working together.

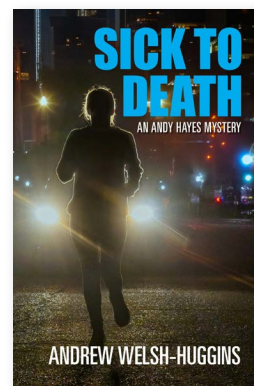
REVIEWED BY ROBIN NESBITT, MLS, COLUMBUS, OH

Welsh-Huggins, Andrew. *Sick to Death: An Andy Hayes Mystery*.

Athens, OH: Swallow Press, 2024.

Sick to Death is the much awaited eighth investigation by Andy Hayes, written by Ohio’s own Andrew Welsh-Huggins. Like the prior books in the series, this investigation heats your blood and holds your attention until the very last word.

Author Welsh-Huggins draws upon current events and weaves a few mysteries around them, forcing his detective to navigate politics, deception, and family in Columbus, Ohio. In this new mystery, Andy Hayes, a “disgraced quarterback-turned-private eye,” is now employed as a guard at the Columbus Museum of Art. When he foils an art heist, he is fired for breaking museum protocols.



At the same time, Andy discovers he’s the father of a twenty-something daughter. She not only helps him track down the stolen painting, but hires him to find her mother’s murderer.

With those two bombshells, Hayes becomes embroiled in a case that involves COVID anti-vaxxers, nurses, and more. Of course, he frequently butts heads with local law enforcement—it wouldn’t be an Andy Hayes story without that drama.

If you love hometown PI mysteries or thrillers with a touch of noir, *Sick to Death* is the book for you. Don't miss it!

For readers new to the Andy Hayes Mystery series, you don't have to read the seven prior books to understand *Sick to Death*, but you'll enjoy it more if you do. Start with *Fourth Down and Out*, the first book in this edge-of-your-seat series, and work your way to the present.

Andrew Welsh-Huggins lives in Columbus and was an investigation crime reporter. In addition to writing the Andy Hayes Mystery series, he has also published the standalone crime novel *The End of the Road* and edited the anthology *Columbus Noir*.

REVIEWED BY MIRIAM KAHN, LIBRARIAN, COLUMBUS, OH

POETRY

Byas, Taylor. *I Done Clicked My Heels Three Times*.

New York, NY: Soft Skull Press, 2023.

Referencing the fantastical urban wonderland of the 1970s musical and film *The Wiz*, Taylor Byas' *I Done Clicked My Heels Three Times* threads a candid telling using images, sound, poetic form, and a distinct voice. Byas' poems shape Chicago as an origin of setting and character where each poem resonates with many parts: magic, sense of place, coming of age, social and cultural matters, reflection, and revelation.



The “South Side” poems are a mapping of place and being. These seven poems, each with fourteen lines, are interspersed throughout the full-length collection, serving as stops and points of reference on a journey of lived experiences and geography. Each subsequent poem in the series (I-VII) borrows an exact line from the previous poem's last stanza, sharpening the imagery and form with each echoing first line—a scaffolding marking wonder, memory, and a discovery of oneself in between and beyond the entangled circumstances of a life.

Encompassing the structure, framing, and syllabic rhythms and patterns of the poems, the cascading lines of the “South Side” series are unwavering and effective in guiding the reader to anticipation and surprise throughout the whole of the work. In “South Side (V)” Byas writes:

To those who come after, this is the law of the town—
the South Side is not a place, but a state of being,
a song . . .

This poem's first line is an extension of “South Side (IV),” which offers a brief preview, exploring unspoken codes of behavior and the settings of culture. “South Side (V)” follows with a sense of not only place, but also being. The poem shapes imagery that conjures up childhood sensory references and memories, both literal and abstract, savory and sweet. The “South Side” poems offer discrete ornaments throughout the collection, a persistent narrative of past in parallel or intersecting with the present, and at times offering a clarity, awakening, or reassurance with the use of sound and rhyme, as in the lines:

I learn
to find you everywhere I look, to glean
your shadow from Cincinnati's light and turn

it into home when I feel lost, when I am ailing.
This is what teaches me love—your streets, their
wailing.

The body, in all its complexities, shapes, and desires, recurs in many of the poems in this collection. The body in this work is subject and subjected to the consequences of choice and circumstances and an array of complicated human matters. There are many glimpses of joy in these poetic forms, as well as other more layered notes calling to and from the body. In “The Therapist Asks Me, ‘What Are You Afraid Of?’” Byas writes:

Every
night, I whipped the glitter into a storm
and the same small figurines grasped
at one another in the cold; nothing changed
this.

In “Don’t Go Getting Nostalgic,” Byas goes on to write:

A
version of me that still believes that loving you was
enough, that wanting
things to work would make it so.

That steady longing and ache are resonant throughout this body of work.

At times, the collection feels like a character study, where the poems witness and take the shape of human behaviors and precise senses of place. Byas writes:

I want to know
the rush, what turns
the Ohio River to a second
sky, those flickers
of office windows and pill-bottle-
orange streetlights
peppering its surface—tell me,
which constellation
looks like me?

With a balance of wit, affect, and wisdom, *I Done Clicked My Heels Three Times* offers a narrative mood that begins with Chicago, extends with the turning of seasons, and ends with the moon.

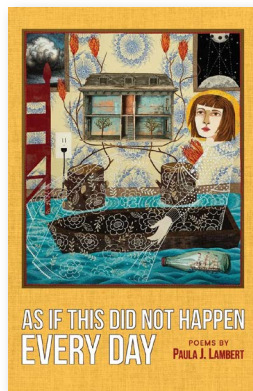
REVIEWED BY DIONNE CUSTER EDWARDS, WRITER/POET, EDUCATOR, AND HEAD OF LEARNING & PUBLIC PRACTICE, WEXNER CENTER FOR THE ARTS

Lambert, Paula J. *As If This Did Not Happen Every Day*.

Russell, KY: Sheila-Na-Gig Editions, 2024.

Paula J. Lambert’s new collection of poems bravely compares what we believe the world to be—warm and safe—to what the world, and the life it sustains, really is—brutal, cruel, and full of death. From Darwin’s understanding of nature as “survival of the fittest” to the deliberate destructiveness and violence of the human race, Lambert “tells it like it is” in these achingly precise poems.

And she does it, not self-righteously or patronizingly



or hopelessly, but, as fellow poet Mary Oliver does, by simply observing and recording.

The collection is divided into three sections. The first describes a despairing sequence of cruelty and destruction: young boys trap and kill hummingbirds or pin girls down in the schoolyard to be kissed against their will. Even more disturbing—to me, at least—is what humans, the dominant species on the planet, do to other living things and to the earth itself. “Everglades (Burmese Python)” begins: “They killed her, of course. / It was what they had set out to do.” As three men try to capture this 18-foot long, 215-pound python, she manages to “slap one upside the head with her tail” before being killed. In the aftermath, the speaker asks:

Wouldn’t you, I wondered,
fight like hell after so many years
of surviving in a place you never wanted to be?
Wouldn’t you devour every single thing in your path?

In turn, “Weight” is a catalog of the ways humankind has managed to exceed the weight of “all living things on the planet” by producing “human-made materials”—toothbrushes, Tonka trucks, toilet bowls, and Tupperware, just to name a few—that now weigh in at 1.1 trillion tons. “How we love / to know things, make things, / measure things, kill things,” the speaker observes. “How little we complain of the weight / we ask the Earth to bear.”

The second section questions what—if anything—is to be done. The speaker declares in “Splendor,” “I never asked for this life, what it gives, / what it takes away / its every moment of cruelty / and joy.” But there are moments of clarity, as when the speaker asks a beautiful bird of paradise for forgiveness, “. . . for we have surely sinned, / so many times / and in so many gruesome ways” that forgiving will be a “testament to what we might / be instead of what we might own”—certainly a change the world needs right now.

Finally, the third section offers insight—albeit provisional—into how to make peace with the world as it is. One way is to bear witness. As “Ars Poetica: Wild Geese” puts the question: shouldn’t humans “be better at seeing what the world lays bare / before us?” Another is acceptance of the world’s terms, of our own fallibility, of our day-to-death existence, of never knowing how everything continues and interconnects. “Uncertainty:

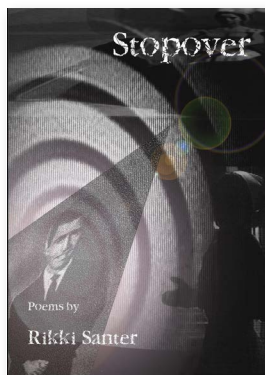
Starlings,” the longest poem in the collection, comes to this wise and perhaps feasible solution:

... What’s left for us all
 but to stick together, to sing and to soar where we are
 when we can.
 To let the food we find pass through us.
 To trust the sky and rise.
 To rise and rise
 again.

REVIEWED BY KATE FOX. A RESIDENT OF ATHENS, OH, FOX’S POETRY HAS APPEARED IN *THE NEW OHIO REVIEW*, *GREAT RIVER REVIEW*, *GREEN MOUNTAINS REVIEW*, AND *WEST BRANCH*. HER MOST RECENT BOOK, *THE COMPANY MISERY LOVES*, WAS PUBLISHED BY SHEILA-NA-GIG EDITIONS IN JUNE 2024.

Santer, Rikki. *Stopover*.
 Luchador Press: Big Tuna, TX, 2021.

The last time I watched an episode of *The Twilight Zone* was during my freshman year of high school, over a decade ago. While reading Rikki Santer’s *Stopover*, memories of evenings on my friend’s couch resurfaced. An ode to the show that has affected generations of fans and viewers, Santer’s eleventh collection of eerie, ethereal poetry follows expertly in Rod Serling’s footsteps.



In many ways, it feels futile or disingenuous to write a narrative review of this collection which, like *The Twilight Zone* itself, is episodic, non-linear, and unsettling in the best way. Santer’s storytelling and language invite readers to take another look, to read between the lines, and to question what the truth really is—or if it even really exists. But themes do emerge: of memory, of vision and illusion, and of the inescapability of life and death. Images of Yayoi Kusama’s Infinity Mirror Rooms (“Detours”), of a “mirror’s cold echo” (“First Offering”), show how nothing is quite what it seems; mirrors distort and reflect (“Enchanted Things”), creating infinity within ourselves while simultaneously inviting us to—truly, deeply—look at ourselves. Mirrors, like memory, show us what we want to see, as Santer implicitly reminds us. Memory is the ultimate *Twilight*

Zone, “a land of both shadow and substance, of things and ideas,” made nowhere clearer than in the final sentence of “Consider”: “No such place as exactly what happened.”

Throughout *Stopover*, Santer invites (or forces) us to reconsider our humanity. She doesn’t shy away from the harshness of life—and death—while also acknowledging our tendency to gloss over it, to avoid facing it head-on. Our existence is like a coin that “lands on its edge / and all it takes / is a vagrant breeze, / a slight vibration / to knock it over” (“Coin”).

Santer’s skillful craftsmanship as a poet adds another dimension (a fifth dimension?) to her *Twilight Zone*-esque imagery. She alternates between free verse and structured poems, employs rhyme, run-on sentences, and different narratorial voices. Just when you become comfortable with her style, Santer shifts and leaves you feeling unbalanced—while still giving the reader a clear sense of her voice as a poet.

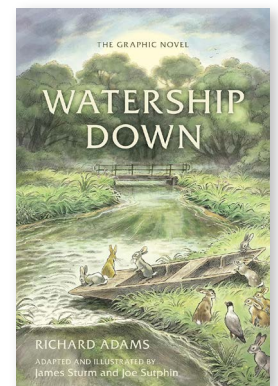
Written and published during the pandemic, Rikki Santer’s *Stopover* feels like a *Twilight Zone* for the twenty-first century.

REVIEWED BY CHARLOTTE HOUGHTON, LIBRARIAN, COLUMBUS, OH

MIDDLE GRADE & YOUNG ADULT

Adams, Richard. *Watership Down: The Graphic Novel*. Illustrated by Joe Sutphin.
 Adapted by James Sturm.
 New York, NY: Ten Speed Graphic, 2023.

The source text of this delightful graphic novel adaptation is an unlikely classic: an epic adventure tale about a group of rabbits journeying a few miles in search of a safe place to build their new warren and the dangers they face along the way, from rivers to farm cats. Seems like a hard concept to pitch to a publisher! Yet Richard Adams’ *Watership Down* has been in print since 1972, captivating generations of readers of all ages with its gripping



story, observant descriptions of nature, and masterful worldbuilding—not an imaginary world, but the one we humans trample and develop—as seen, traversed, and interpreted at ground level by burly, loyal Bigwig, visionary Fiver, accidental (but worthy) leader Hazel, and their motley, resourceful, resilient companions.

I re-read *Watership Down* every ten years or so and find I'm turning to it more frequently the older (and more nostalgic?) I become. I first learned about the then-forthcoming graphic novelization of *Watership Down* by Ohio-based illustrator Joe Sutphin with collaborator James Sturm when I was kayaking along the Scioto River in downtown Columbus in spring 2023. While taking a break from paddling to check something about riverbanks on my phone, I came across the publishing announcement. As two of the most thrilling and satisfying episodes in the book involve river crossings (one depicted on the cover of the graphic novel), I was extra-tickled to read this news while floating on a river myself—although I nearly capsized from excitement. (No small feat in a kayak on nearly-still water!) I managed to make it home dry, where I immediately grabbed my old paperback copy from the shelf to while away the months until the October publication date.

It was so worth the wait. *Watership Down: The Graphic Novel* is a faithful, loving, and thoughtfully-rendered adaptation that makes all good choices about what to summarize and what to elevate. It contains about one percent as many words as its source text—and every one of them devoted to dialogue—so the illustrations have a heavy lift. It's impressive how Sutphin can incorporate so much story into the expressions he draws in a rabbit's eyes; evoke emotions like menace just from the twisting motions in the body of a hawk, dog, or fox; and establish atmosphere in the illustrations of woods, fields, and sky.

Watership Down: The Graphic Novel is likely of most interest (and satisfaction) to fans of the original book, but it is also a great choice for readers of other complex, animal-centered stories, such as *The Eyes and the Impossible* and *The One and Only Ivan*. Don't let the fluffy rabbits on the book's cover fool you, though. *Watership Down* is thematically dense, and several scenes contain violence, bloodshed, and death, which may be upsetting for sensitive readers and younger children. As such, this book is recommended for readers ages ten and up.

You can pair your reading (or re-reading!) of *Watership Down: The Graphic Novel* with a field trip to a park or natural area to observe the movement of wildlife. Or just let Hazel and Fiver's story adjust your attitude toward the pesky bunnies in your own backyard or garden.

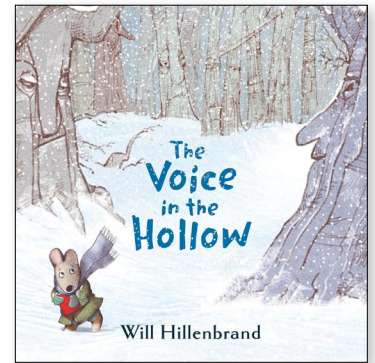
REVIEWED BY JANET INGRAHAM DWYER, LIBRARY CONSULTANT, STATE LIBRARY OF OHIO

JUVENILE

Hillenbrand, Will. *The Voice in the Hollow*. New York, NY: Holiday House, 2023.

I liked *The Voice in the Hollow* a lot! This book is about a mouse named Hubert. He meets a new friend who helps him walk home through the Hollow during a snow storm.

My favorite character was Hubert because he bravely walked through the Hollow, even though it was scary. My favorite part was when he got home, and his family welcomed him. I think the pictures were amazing because there were a lot of details, and they were very neat in how they told the story. I think Will Hillenbrand is a great writer and illustrator because he adds lots of details to his stories. I would tell my friends to read this book or read it to my little brother and sister.



Will Hillenbrand lives in Ohio and was born in Cincinnati. He has written and illustrated over seventy-five books! I can't wait to read more of them.

REVIEWED BY KENNEDY KAGY, AGE SEVEN. KENNEDY LIVES IN AMES, IOWA, AND IS IN THIRD GRADE. SHE LOVES READING NEW BOOKS WITH HER GRANDMOTHER, KIM KIEHL. AS THE OHIOANA LIBRARY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, KIM LOVES SHARING NEW CHILDREN'S BOOKS WITH HER FAMILY AND OTHER YOUNG READERS.

Disclaimer: The views and opinions expressed in book reviews are solely the reviewers' and do not reflect the opinions or beliefs of the Ohioana Library Association.

Book List

The following books were added to Ohioana's collection between June and September 2024. Look for them at your local library or bookstore!

NONFICTION

Abdurraqib, Hanif. *There's Always This Year: On Basketball and Ascension*. New York, NY: Random House, 2024.

Growing up in Columbus, Ohio, in the 1990s, Hanif Abdurraqib witnessed a golden era of basketball, one in which legends like LeBron James were forged and countless others weren't. His lifelong love of the game leads Abdurraqib into an emotionally rich exploration of what it means to make it, who we think deserves success, the tension between excellence and expectation, and the very notion of role models.

Adams, Ian, and Randall Lee Schieber. *This Place of Silence: Ohio's Cemeteries and Burial Grounds*. Text by Robin L. Smith. Athens, OH: Swallow Press, 2024. *This Place of Silence* is a photographic portrait of Ohio's cemeteries and burial grounds by Ohio photographers Ian Adams and Randall Lee Schieber. The text and photo captions by Robin L. Smith provide an overview of the history of burial grounds, from prehistoric mounds through modern "green" cemeteries, as well as many fascinating details about gravestones, mausoleums, statuary, and cemetery landscapes.

Baumgartner, Homer. *Rambling Along on the AC&Y Railroad*. Elida,

OH: Hofmann House, 2007.

A collection of photographs and stories from Homer Baumgartner, who served thirty-four years with the Akron, Canton & Youngstown Railroad, primarily as a brakeman and conductor.

Burson, Scott, and Sam Smathers. *From Bulldog to Bengal: The Joe Burrow Story Through the Eyes of His Hometown*. Wilmington, OH: Orange Frazer Press, 2023.

Experience the inspiring story of Cincinnati Bengals quarterback Joe Burrow and his rise to football stardom. This account is told through interviews with Joe's parents, childhood friends, teammates, and coaches.

Buskey, Megan. *Ukraine is Not Dead Yet: A Family Story of Exile and Return*. Stuttgart, Germany: ibidem Press, 2023.

When Megan Buskey's grandmother Anna dies in Cleveland in 2013, Megan is compelled to uncover and document her grandmother's life as a native of Ukraine. A Ukrainian American, Buskey returns to her family's homeland and enlists her relatives there to help her in her quest—and discovers much more than she expected.

Christensen, George A. *Incidents & Episodes: Tales of Rocky River and Rockport Township, Ohio*. Rocky River, OH: Rocky River Historical Society, 2014.

This collection features 180 true stories about the 1800s and early 1900s in Rocky River, Ohio, as well as the former Rockport Township and surrounding area.

Crago, David C. *The Creation of a Crusader: Senator Thomas Morris and the Birth of the Antislavery Movement*. Kent, OH: The Kent State University Press, 2023.

In this first expansive study of Senator Thomas Morris' life and contributions, David C. Crago persuasively argues that historians have wrongly marginalized the politician's role in the early antislavery movement.

Dafney, Namara L. *Habits from the Inside Out: A Holistic Perspective*. Columbus, OH: Namara L. Dafney, 2023.

Habits from the Inside Out: A Holistic Perspective takes a deep dive into the world of habits, bringing understanding to the methodology of habitual behavior. Using the Bible's timeless wisdom, this self-help guide helps readers create new behaviors and good habits to overcome today's challenges.

Daiker, Donald. *Hemingway's Earliest Heroes: Nick Adams and Jake Barnes*. Dubuque, IA: Kendall Hunt Publishing, 2024.

This in-depth study explores Ernest Hemingway's most iconic heroes, Nick Adams and Jake Barnes, and their similarities to the legendary author's real life.

Ellington, Tameka N., ed. *Black Hair in a White World*. Kent, OH: The Kent State University Press, 2023.

The essays in this anthology discuss representations and responses to Black hair in American society, including analysis of research findings about marketing messages and depictions of Black hair in

popular culture, discussions of workplace discrimination, and stories about the origins of the natural hair movement and how many Black people have learned to embrace and celebrate their natural hair.

Elliott, Cantly A. ***Benched: Underrated Teams and Players in NBA History***. Pittsburgh, PA: Dorrance Publishing Company, 2023.

While Michael Jordan, LeBron James, and Kobe Bryant are undeniable greats in NBA history, the sport has also had plenty of other influential players and teams who seem to be overlooked. This book highlights the important people and moments in NBA history that don't get the credit they deserve.

Ellison, Jim. ***Columbus Pizza: A Slice of History***. Charleston, SC: The History Press, 2020.

Written by Jim Ellison, founder of the first pizza tour in Columbus, Ohio, this book chronicles the delicious history of one of the city's favorite foods.

Feldman, Marla J. ***Biblical Women Speak: Hearing Their Voices Through New and Ancient Midrash***. Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2023.

Rabbi Marla J. Feldman's *Biblical Women Speak* employs Midrash (interpretative techniques) to discover ten biblical women's stories from a female point of view and provide insights beyond how ancient male scholars viewed them.

Flaum, Stephen. ***A Story Never Shared: The Last Prussian***. Hillsboro, OH: Stephen Flaum, 2023. *A Story Never Shared: The Last*

Prussian is the life story of Karl Wilhelm Flaum, a man of illegitimate birth in mid-nineteenth-century Prussia. It is the story of a common man, living through uncommon times, and his struggle to become and achieve more in life than his birth allowed him.

Graham, Jonathan. ***The Sky Was Always Underground: A Lyric Memoir of Appalachia***. Mechanicsburg, PA: Catamount Press, 2024.

This collection laments a time, region, and culture of hard-working, land-loving Appalachians who celebrate and grieve together, struggle against the odds to succeed, and overcome poverty and tragedy to create better lives for themselves.

Gurvis, Sandra. ***Three Ringling Circus: A History of Sarasota, Florida, and the Famous Ringling Brothers***. Palm Beach, FL: Pineapple Press, 2024.

Three Ringling Circus spotlights the history of John and Mable Ringling and the Ringling family, bringing to life their past and present impact on Florida's unique artistic, historical, and cultural scene.

Jenkins, Christopher. ***Assimilation v. Integration in Music Education: Leading Change Toward Greater Equity (CMS Emerging Fields in Music)***. New York, NY: Routledge, 2023.

Rooted in Jenkins' experience working with BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) students at a major American conservatory, this book articulates issues facing minority students in conservatories and schools of music, including recruitment and cultural issues that alienate students.

Jensen, Billy. ***Killers Amidst Killers: Hunting Serial Killers Operating Under the Cloak of America's Opioid Epidemic***. New York, NY: Post Hill Press, 2024.

Bestselling author, cohost of the hit podcast *The Murder Squad*, and investigative journalist Billy Jensen goes to Columbus, Ohio, where he examines the unsolved cases of eighteen dead and missing women, whom he suspects were the victims of serial killers on the loose and operating under cover of the opioid epidemic in America's heartland.

Jones, Inez Heller. ***They Call Me Blessed! An Empty Nester's Inspirational, True Story of Prayer, Faith, and Endurance***. Meadville, PA: Christian Faith Publishing, 2024.

They Call Me Blessed! is the story of author Inez Heller Jones' odyssey of faith during one of the most difficult periods of her life.

Jordan, Bradwin, II. ***Your Breakthrough: 7 Principles to Become the Person You Were Meant to Be***. Wapakoneta, OH: Bradwin Jordan II, 2023.

Through inspiring stories and practical advice, this book will help readers break through their limiting beliefs. Each chapter covers one of the seven principles in detail, providing the tools and guidance needed to put them into action.

Landis, Paul. ***The Final Witness: A Kennedy Secret Service Agent Breaks His Silence After 60 Years***. Chicago, IL: Chicago Review Press, 2024.

Special Agent Paul Landis was in the follow-up car directly behind John F. Kennedy's when the president was shot and killed. He wrote and

filed a report, but was never called to testify to the Warren Commission. *The Final Witness* is Landis' account of one of America's most enduring mysteries.

Lazarus, Adam. *The Wingmen: The Unlikely, Unusual, Unbreakable Friendship Between John Glenn and Ted Williams*. New York, NY: Citadel Press, 2023.

The untold story of the unique fifty-year friendship between two American icons: John Glenn, the pioneer of space exploration, and Ted Williams, the greatest hitter in baseball history.

Legg, Jack. *Digging Up Devils: The Search for a Satanic Murder Cult in Rural Ohio*. Toledo, OH: Piminge Press, 2023.

On June 20, 1985, police ignited a media frenzy when they raided a farmhouse just outside of Toledo, Ohio. They expected to find weapons, drugs, victims of human sacrifice, and the High Warlock of a secretive satanic cult. After three days of digging, they found nothing. Looking to similar moral panics across the nation, *Digging Up Devils* finally unravels the mystery behind the greatest case that never was.

Lizano Briceño, Robinson D. *Crimes That Turned Off the Music*.

Marysville, OH: Robinson D. Lizano Briceño, 2023.

Immerse yourself in the dark and enigmatic chronicles of murdered musicians in a world where vibrant rhythms and unforgettable melodies are woven with threads of intrigue and tragedy. In *Crimes That Turned Off the Music*, author Robinson D. Lizano Briceño uncovers the motives and secrets behind the deaths of legendary artists.

Mainzer, Daniel. *Akron's Rubber Industry 1976-1987: A Personal Journey*. Akron, OH: Daniel Mainzer, 2023.

This book covers Daniel Mainzer's eleven years as an in-house photographer at Firestone and General Tire, documenting life in the plants and the death of the Akron rubber industry.

Malensek, Scott. *Dancing with Dragons: Close Calls with Nuclear Weapons*. Uniontown, OH: Scott Malensek, 2024.

From the hushed laboratories of World War II, where the seeds of atomic ambition were first sown, to the blistering firestorms of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the journey of humanity through the nuclear age has been fraught with peril and uncertainty. Delve into the heart of this gripping history and journey through the cataclysmic events that shaped our world with prolific author Scott Malensek.

Nesbit, Jay. *Rise Above the Rut: Rediscovering Joy and Purpose in Your Life*. Cleveland, OH: One Books Publishing, 2023.

Jay Nesbit's *Rise Above the Rut* introduces a transformative three-step process that serves as a bridge, taking you from your current state of meaningless monotony to a more fulfilling life. From uncovering your unique purpose to writing an action plan and achieving relentless progress, this game-changing book is ideal for those seeking guidance in our fast-paced, unforgiving society.

O'Brien, Keith. *Charlie Hustle: The Rise and Fall of Pete Rose, and the Last Glory Days of Baseball*. New York, NY: Pantheon Books, 2024.

A chronicle of baseball's immortal

Pete Rose—one of America's most iconic, charismatic, and polarizing figures—and a cultural history of baseball and America in the second half of the twentieth century.

Olsen, Gregg. *The Amish Wife: Unraveling the Lies, Secrets, and Conspiracy That Let a Killer Go Free*. Seattle, WA: Thomas & Mercer, 2024.

In 1977, in an Ohio Amish community, pregnant wife and mother Ida Stutzman perished during a barn fire. Ida's husband, Eli, was never considered a suspect. But when Eli eventually rejected the faith and took his son with him, murder followed. With the help of witnesses and long-buried letters, author Gregg Olsen finally uncovers the disturbing truth about Ida's death and the conspiracy of silence that kept it hidden for forty-five years.

Parisi, Nicholas. *Rod Serling: His Life, Work, and Imagination*.

Jackson, MI: University Press of Mississippi, 2023.

In great detail and including never-before-published insights drawn directly from Rod Serling's personal correspondence, unpublished writings, speeches, and unproduced scripts, Nicholas Parisi explores Serling's entire, massive body of work. With a foreword by Serling's daughter, Anne Serling, *Rod Serling: His Life, Work, and Imagination* is part biography, part videography, and part critical analysis. It is a painstakingly-researched look at all of Serling's work—in and out of *The Twilight Zone*.

Pryce, Steven. *One-Percent*. North Canton, OH: Steven Pryce, 2024.

Steven Pryce is a passionate

advocate for the 21 percent of the population that deals with mental health issues. He knows their challenges well because he is among that number, having lived through the social, physical, and emotional challenges of schizophrenia. In this collection, Pryce showcases his many writings on mental health, from poems and short stories to articles and reviews of important books in the mental health field.

Raison, Brian. *The Encouraging Mentor: Your Guide to 40 Conversations that Matter.*

Bloomington, IL: WestBow Press, 2024.

This book presents an alternative to formal mentoring programs that sometimes fail. Grounded in adult learning theory, this nonformal mentoring approach allows mentors to deploy tools at the right time to help people (or groups) grow when they are ready.

Raison, Brian. *40 Conversations: A Guided Journal for Personal and Professional Growth.* Bloomington, IL: WestBow Press, 2024.

This fillable workbook prompts readers to grow personally and professionally, regardless of age or career stage. Topics include life purpose and mission, career advancement, expanding perspectives, and increasing connectivity.

Reilich, Gabriel, and Lucia Knell, eds. *Upworthy Good People: Stories from the Best of Humanity.*

Washington, DC: National Geographic, 2024.

Embrace—and share—the transformative power of kindness with this treasure trove of feel-good stories brought to you by Upworthy,

the beloved social media platform where millions find inspiration, joy, and daily affirmation.

Smith, M. Kristina, and Kevin L. Moore. *Unnatural Ohio: A History of Buckeye Cryptids, Legends & Other Mysteries.* Illus. by Kari Ann

Schultz. Charleston, SC: The History Press, 2023.

Strange things are afoot in the Buckeye State. Authors M. Kristina Smith and Kevin Moore parse urban legends from history as they explore the unnatural side of Ohio's heritage.

Sung, Hou-Mei, Julia F. Andrews, and Kuiyi Shen. *From Shanghai to Ohio: Woo Chong Yung (Wu Zhongxiong), 1898–1989.*

Cincinnati, OH: Cincinnati Art Museum/D Giles Limited, 2024.

This brand-new, lavishly illustrated publication features over ninety works by Woo Chong Yung (Wu Zhongxiong), a Shanghai-born artist who emigrated to Columbus, Ohio, in the 1960s. Most of the paintings included in this collection have never been published or publicly displayed.

Tosi, Christina. *All About Cookies: A Milk Bar Baking Book.* New York, NY: Clarkson Potter, 2022.

This mind-blowing collection includes more than one hundred new cookie recipes and inspiration to create your own masterpieces by celebrity chef Christina Tosi, the founder of Milk Bar, host of *Bake Squad*, and inventor of the Compost Cookie.

Tosi, Christina. *Dessert Can Save the World: Stories, Secrets, and Recipes for a Stubbornly Joyful Existence.* New York, NY: Harmony Books, 2022.

Studded with personal stories and unorthodox recipes, *Dessert Can Save the World* is chef Christina Tosi's book of wisdom for igniting passion, following your joy, and creating a satisfying life.

Turzillo, Jane Ann. *Northern Ohio Cold Cases.* Charleston, SC: The History Press, 2024.

Northern Ohio is best known for its stunning lake views and bustling cities, but it has also seen its measure of tragedy. Award-winning author Jane Ann Turzillo examines the region's unsolved cases.

Veley, Jonathan A. *A Field Guide to Sheaffer's Pencils.* Newark, OH: Legendary Lead Pencil Company, 2023.

The W. A. Sheaffer Pen Company, founded in 1912, was one of the first major writing instrument manufacturers in America to fully embrace mechanical pencils as a vital component in its business. For half a century after the introduction of the "Sharp Point" pencil in 1917, Sheaffer led the industry with numerous technical and design innovations. *A Field Guide to Sheaffer's Pencils* thoroughly examines the history and taxonomy of these pencils.

Wald, Christina. *Sketching Here & Everywhere: My Sketching Obsession.* Cincinnati, OH: Blue Wald Press, 2023.

The latest book from illustrator Christina Wald is all about sketching from life, urban sketching, and sketching from one's imagination. In addition to tutorials and tips, the book includes stories and observations from Wald's years of sketching in all sorts of places.

Wappler, Margaret. *A Good Bad Boy: Luke Perry and How a Generation Grew Up*. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 2024.

Best known for playing loner rebel Dylan McKay in *Beverly Hills, 90210*, Luke Perry was fifty-two years old when he died of a stroke in 2019. Only upon Perry's death, as stories poured out online about his authenticity and kindness, did it become clear how little was known about the exceedingly humble Ohio-born actor, and how deeply he impacted Gen X and popular culture. Author Margaret Wappler examines who Perry was and why he was unique among his Hollywood peers.

Webster, Rachel Jamison. *Benjamin Banneker and Us: Eleven Generations of an American Family*. New York, NY: Henry Holt and Company, 2023.

In 1791, Thomas Jefferson hired a Black man to help survey Washington, DC. That man was Benjamin Banneker, an African American mathematician, writer of almanacs, and one of the greatest astronomers of his generation. Banneker then wrote what would become a famous letter to Jefferson, imploring the new president to examine his hypocrisy, as someone who claimed to love liberty yet was an enslaver. More than two centuries later, Rachel Jamison Webster, an ostensibly white woman, learns that this groundbreaking Black forefather is also her distant relative. Webster draws on oral history and conversations with her DNA cousins to weave an investigation of race and shared American history.

Williams, Sumica Midcalf, and Cozetta Conner. *Sierra Screams*. Shaker Heights, OH: Sumica Midcalf Williams, 2023.

Sierra Screams is a stirring memoir of transformation, tracing the journey from a tumultuous childhood to a resilient adulthood. A testament to the power of the human spirit, readers will witness the undeniable strength found in love, safety, and compassion.

FICTION

Baumgartner, S. F. *Buried Secrets*. West Chester, OH: FB Publishing, 2023.

After years of blissful ignorance of his heritage, Dylan Roche is leery of an invitation to visit his wealthy maternal grandmother. Wishing his mother was alive to advise him, Dylan sets off to investigate the family's history, despite his feeling of foreboding.

Bell, David. *The Finalists*. New York, NY: Berkley, 2022.

The competitive selection process for a prized college scholarship turns deadly in the latest thriller from *USA Today*-bestselling author David Bell.

Bell, David. *Try Not to Breathe*. New York, NY: Berkley, 2023.

A traumatic experience in the line of duty forces thirty-year-old Avery Rogers to abandon her position as a Kentucky State Police officer. She retreats to a college town, where she works an unfulfilling job as a security guard. When Avery's father calls frantically to say her estranged half-sister is missing and in danger, will Avery risk everything to save someone she hardly knows?

Black, Lisa. *The Deepest Kill (Locard Institute Thriller #3)*. New York, NY: Kensington, 2024. With a duo of complex female protagonists, breakneck plotting,

and authenticity informed by her career as a crime scene analyst, *New York Times*-bestselling author Lisa Black brings readers another thriller featuring forensic experts Ellie Carr and Rachael Davies. This time, they are called to a billionaire's private compound on Florida's Gulf Coast to investigate a tragic death amid a dangerous storm of power, deception, and conspiracy.

Buckell, Tobias S. *A Stranger in the Citadel*. San Francisco, CA: Tachyon Publications, 2023.

At the revolutionary crossroads of magic, betrayal, and long-forgotten truths, a naïve, compassionate royal and a determined, hunted librarian discover a dangerous world of mortal and ancient menaces.

Chiaverini, Jennifer. *The Museum of Lost Quilts (Elm Creek Quilts #22)*. New York, NY: William Morrow, 2024.

Jennifer Chiaverini's beloved and bestselling series returns with the first Elm Creek Quilts novel since 2019. When Summer Sullivan, a master's student at the University of Chicago, returns home for the celebrated quilter's retreat, she finds her passion for history renewed—and discovers a promising new future for herself.

Conrad, Tim. *The Machine We Trust*. Stevens Point, WI: Cornerstone Press, 2024.

In *The Machine We Trust*, Tim Conrad's narrators and characters come of age in a surreal American landscape—sometimes late, sometimes unsuccessfully.

Ellison, Harlan, ed. *Dangerous Visions*. Ashland, OR: Blackstone Publishing, 2024.

Dubbed "the most significant and

controversial science fiction book” of its generation, Harlan Ellison’s groundbreaking collection launched an entire sub-genre: New Wave science fiction. With contributions from legendary authors, *Dangerous Visions* returns to print in a stunning edition perfect for new and original fans alike.

Ellison, Harlan. *Greatest Hits*. Edited by J. Michael Straczynski. New York, NY: Union Square & Co., 2024.

As one of the great writers of speculative fiction of the twentieth century, Harlan Ellison shaped the science fiction, fantasy, and horror genres. This inventive and provocative collection of his most-acclaimed stories is a perfect treasury for old Ellison fans as well as readers discovering this zany, polyphonic writer for the first time.

Flower, Amanda. *Crime and Cherry Pits (Farm to Table #4)*. Scottsdale, AZ: Poisoned Pen Press, 2024.

Head back to snowy Michigan with Shiloh Bellamy just in time for the annual cherry pit spitting contest. It’s all fun and games until the local drama professor chokes on more than just his pride.

Flower, Amanda. *To Slip the Bonds of Earth*. New York, NY: Kensington, 2024.

While not as famous as her older siblings Wilbur and Orville, the celebrated inventors of flight, Katharine Wright is equally inventive—especially when it comes to solving crimes. *USA Today*–bestselling author Amanda Flower brings readers a new historical mystery series inspired by the real sister of the Wright Brothers.

Glasper, Janyce Denise. *Route*. Dayton, OH: Janyce Denise Glasper, 2023.

Set in fictional Dandelion, Ohio, and split into six parts, *Route* is an evocative coming-of-age story centering on the complex dialogue between a bus driver and a frequent passenger.

Graff, Andrew J. *True North*. New York, NY: Ecco, 2024.

From the author of *Raft of Stars* comes a heartfelt novel of marriage and whitewater rafting, following one couple as they navigate the changing currents of family, community, and the river itself.

Grandy, Emily. *Michikusa House*. Northampton, MA: Homebound Publications, 2023.

Blending flashbacks with a tender love story, *Michikusa House* is a work of literary fiction that draws on author Emily Grandy’s own experience of recovering from the most lethal of all psychiatric disorders. This award-winning debut takes a critical view of contemporary nutrition science and American food culture while also exploring the transformative power of illness.

Himes, Chester. *The Essential Harlem Detectives: A Rage in Harlem, the Real Cool Killers, the Crazy Kill, Cotton Comes to Harlem*. New York, NY: Everyman’s Library, 2024.

A one-volume selection of four novels in the legendary Harlem Detectives series—blistering, groundbreaking capers set in Harlem’s criminal underworld—by master crime writer Chester Himes. Includes an introduction by *New York Times*–bestselling author S. A. Cosby.

Huber, Anna Lee. *Sisters of Fortune: A Novel of the Titanic*. New York, NY: Kensington, 2024.

Based on the true story of the Fortune sisters—three young women, each at a crossroads when they boarded the RMS *Titanic* in the spring of 1912—and how that maiden voyage would transform their lives in profound and unexpected ways.

Huebner, Karla. *In Search of the Magic Theater*. Raleigh, NC: Regal House Publishing, 2022.

Why, the rather staid young cellist Sarah wonders, should her aunt rent their spare room to the perhaps unstable Kari Zilke? Like the nephew in Hermann Hesse’s *Steppenwolf*, Sarah finds herself taking an unexpected interest in the lodger, but she is unable to stop at providing a mere introduction to Kari’s narrative of mid-life crisis and develops her own troubled tale of personal angst and growth.

Huebner, Karla. *Too Early to Know Who’s Winning*. Castroville, TX: Black Rose Writing, 2023.

Jacobine Flaa and her increasingly unrealistic friend Cinda are approaching retirement in the Midwest in the age of Trump and climate crisis. Both women want to move to the West Coast, but can they afford the housing prices there?

Irvin, J. E. *Betrayed*. Shelter Island Heights, NY: The New Atlantian Library, 2023.

Emma Pearson believes she has the perfect life in Hopewell, Ohio, until her husband’s murder while working undercover reveals a secret life. Now, his actions have placed her and her children in danger. Declining an offer to enter witness protection, she changes her name and goes on the

run to join her best friend Riley in the Adirondacks. The park is so vast, she's certain she can start a new life and hide from her pursuers. Then the assassins start showing up.

Joiner, David. *The Heron Catchers*. Albany, CA: Stone Bridge Press, 2023.

David Joiner's second novel set in the fabled Kanazawa area is an intimate yet understated look at an American who seeks recovery after his marriage to a Japanese woman has failed.

Kachuba, John, and Jack Gagliardo. *The Bottle Conjuror*. New York, NY: Beck & Branch, 2023.

Desiring to become famous by performing a death-defying feat, a disabled conjuror falls prey to a scoundrel's plot against the son of King George II.

Keyse-Walker, John. *Reefs, Royals, Reckonings (A Teddy Creque Mystery #4)*. Surrey, UK: Severn House, 2023.

Constable Teddy Creque has to get to the bottom of a murder committed during a British royal reception in this lively and atmospheric mystery set in the sunny Caribbean.

Kiste, Gwendolyn. *The Haunting of Velkwood*. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster/Saga Press, 2024.

From Bram Stoker Award-winning author Gwendolyn Kiste comes a chilling novel about three childhood friends who miraculously survive the night everyone in their suburban hometown turned into ghosts.

Klecha, Dave, and Tobias S. Buckell. *The Runes of Engagement*.

San Francisco, CA: Tachyon Publications, 2024.

No one could have been prepared for the day when orcs, trolls, and dragons fell from portals in the sky. But now a very tough (and not quite prepared) platoon of Marines is trapped on the wrong side. The enchanting world may look like Middle Earth, but is nothing like it. While the Marines fend off dangerous, improbable, and rude assailants, their mission is to escort a Very Important Princess who could broker a crucial strategic alliance between worlds. What could possibly go wrong?

Kurtz, Peter. *The Shades Dripped Red (Nick Montaigne #2)*.

Cincinnati, OH: Longitudes Press, 2023.

Based on a horrific, unsolved true crime in author Peter Kurtz's old neighborhood, *The Shades Dripped Red* is the eagerly anticipated follow-up to *Black Jackknife*, featuring suave private detective Nick Montaigne and ex-cop Vern Wister. This time, the duo must face espionage, small-town provincialism, and the military-industrial complex.

Mars, Mary. *Rust & Steel*. Columbus, OH: Diamond Girl Publishing, 2023.

Blown up and tortured in Afghanistan, detective Mike Shields is medically discharged from service. Back home, in the throes of PTSD, he attacks his fiancé, Melody Winters, in his sleep. Fearing for her safety, Mike signs all of his property over to her one night and hits the road as a homeless veteran. When Melody awakens to find him gone, she embarks on a dangerous journey to find him.

Matthews, Olivia. *Coconut Drop Dead (Spice Isle Bakery #3)*. New

York, NY: Minotaur Books, 2023. Brooklyn's annual Caribbean American Heritage Festival is finally here, and Spice Isle Bakery is thrilled to be one of the event's food vendors. Co-owner Lyndsay Murray hopes their West Indian pastries draw people back to the bakery in Little Caribbean. But the day's festivities are cut short when Camille, the lead singer of an up-and-coming reggae band, dies. Camille was close to Lyndsay's cousin Manny, and now he needs Lyndsay's help to make sure the killer faces the music.

Miller, Anessa. *I Never Do This*.

Grass Valley, CA: Sibylline Press, 2024.

LaDene Faye Howell finds herself in police custody recounting her story after her paroled cousin Bobbie Frank appears and engages her in a crime spree.

Petrone, Susan. *The Musical Mozinskis*. Atlanta, GA: The Story Plant, 2024.

The Mozinskis experience music like no family you've ever met. Struggling musicians Vincent Mozinski and Grace Klinefelter marry in the early 1960s, drawn together by the shared ability to see the music they play. The two pass this unique skill along to their ever-growing family of musical prodigies: Clara, Ellington, Bix, Allegro, Thelonious, and Viola. Vincent is convinced the family will rocket to stardom. There's just one problem: Viola is tone deaf.

Pryce, Steven. *The Huntsman's Dog*. North Canton, OH: Steven Pryce, 2024.

This chapbook, featuring short stories about dogs and their relationships with their humans, was written to accompany the

author’s recovery. It is about trying to become a part of a group while facing extraordinary setbacks.

Ryan, Anastasia. *Not Bad for a Girl*. New York, NY: Sourcebooks Casablanca, 2024.

Indiana “Ana” Aaron is a talented coder and IT specialist, but she doesn’t always fit in at work. After speaking up one too many times for the ego of her boss, she’s transferred to a remote team—and it’s clear this is her last chance to blend in. So, when her new boss praises her assertiveness and thanks “Mr. Aaron,” she sees no reason to correct him. But the longer Ana waits to set things straight, the more complicated things get—and the legend of “Indiana” begins to take on a life of its own.

Ryan, Anastasia. *You Should Smile More*. New York, NY: Sourcebooks Casablanca, 2023.

When Vanessa Blair is fired because of her “resting bitch face,” her friends help her drown her sorrows. After a girls’ night of schnapps and imaginary retribution, Vanessa awakens to find her friends bent on a revenge strategy based on the classic business book *The Art of War* by Sun Tzu. At first, Vanessa wants nothing to do with it. But when her ex-boss, Xavier, contests her unemployment and ruins her shot at her dream job, Vanessa is all in.

Sadler, J. V. *Licking*. Cincinnati, OH: J. V. Sadler, 2023.

J. V. Sadler’s first collection of short stories tiptoes the waking and unconscious world. Transcending reality, these stories integrate a diabolical twist to the mundane.

Sapp, Gregg. *Mother-Fracking Earth Day (Holidazed #7)*. Butler, WI: Evolved Publishing, 2024. When the Earth Day parade’s grand marshal is kidnapped, sociologist Huck Carp teams with a hermit calling himself Johnny Appleseed to solve the case.

Sargeant, Patricia. *Her Private Security Detail (Touré Security Group #2)*. Toronto, Canada: Harlequin Romantic Suspense, 2024.

Philanthropist Symone Bishop is the most desirable woman Jeremiah Touré has ever met. She’s also way out of his league, and he can’t get involved with his client. Jerry knows how to protect Symone from the external threats menacing her nonprofit and her life. But can he save her from the devastating secrets the Touré Security Group uncovers?

Smith, Julie Fudge. *The Beast Keepers*. Newark, OH: Boyle & Dalton, 2023.

Jonathan F. St. Roche, a young veterinarian, takes a job in the rural town of Carrollton, Ohio, only to discover it is a safe haven for a menagerie of mythical creatures—including a pregnant Pegasus, a flying monkey with a sprained wing, and a centaur with Cushing’s disease. The creatures rely on him for their medical care and shelter from the outside world. But when a deadly basilisk threatens the town, Jonathan and his new friends must balance the dangerous creature’s needs against the risk to the community.

Swan, Jordan Riley, and K. C. Norton. *In Broad Strokes (The Unwedding Vow #1)*. Story Garden Publishing, 2022.

Straitlaced, painfully shy college student Tyler Wilson has finally done his first bold thing: pose for a compromising piece of art for the outspoken and impulsive artist Chase Zalinski. He sits through the embarrassing portrait, hoping the bravery he miraculously conjured up to answer the ad will give him the courage to ask out the beautiful woman on the other side of the canvas. But his hope of scoring a date with Chase turns to absolute horror when his nude painting is accidentally shipped to the other side of the country, where it awaits exhibition in a national competition.

Tajemna, Colette. *The Corpse in the Trash Room*. Washington, DC: Archelaus, 2024.

In a college dorm in the late 1970s, seven hallmates hold a funeral for a pet hamster, only to stumble upon a body.

Tassone, Don. *Journeys Within*. Kalindipuram, Allahbad, India: Rochak Publishing, 2024.

Journeys Within features an eclectic mix of thirty new short stories. Unexpected events prompt the characters to take a fresh look at their lives and their choices—and what they each discover sets them all on new paths.

Tyler, Tara. *Conduction (Pop Travel #4)*. Columbus, OH: Tara Tyler, 2023.

Jared Nertz is an easygoing ex-juicer gone legit working for Pop Travel Technologies, but as soon as he finishes his long-awaited Conduction project—the process of storing data in the brain—someone immediately steals it and kills his mentor, framing him for the murder. Now, it’s up to his wife,

Miki, and their resourceful friends to prove Jared’s innocence by recovering the stolen tech before the killer sells it.

Warnick, Fiona. *The Skunks*. New York, NY: Tin House, 2024
Isabel, a recent college grad, moves back to her hometown feeling unsure about her future. When she spots three baby skunks in the yard, it feels like a fortuitous sign from the universe. As the summer unfolds, Isabel becomes increasingly preoccupied with the skunks, while also navigating her various jobs and an ambiguous relationship with Eli, the son of the couple she’s house-sitting for. In her own life and in the imagined inner lives of the skunks, Isabel ponders the nature of existence, love versus infatuation, and the small moments that make us animal—and make us human.

White, M J Werthman. *An Invitation to the Party*. Raleigh, NC: Regal House Publishing, 2023.
Garnet, a poet, resides in the fictional western New York village of Haven. A retired bookstore manager, she is also a loving sister, bitter ex-wife, devoted aunt, failure as a mother, doting owner of an imperious Great Pyrenees, and lives down the street from her philandering ex, Bowie. Garnet wants no fuss made for her upcoming seventieth birthday. Her family is determined to ignore her wishes and throw a big surprise party. Things do not go well.

Willow, Ashley. *Stars of Life*. Creston, OH: Ashley Willow, 2023.
While finishing paramedic school and working full time, Alyssa finds herself suddenly facing a divorce. She discovers support—and more—in her long-time friend and

colleague, Michael. The budding romance needs to be kept quiet due to the nature of their professional relationship, but everything unravels when Alyssa is brutally attacked and has to fight for her life. Now, she must learn the difference between surviving and living.

Woodburn, Woody. *The Butterfly Tree: An Extraordinary Saga of Seven Generations*. Sheridan, WY: BarkingBoxer Press, 2024.
From multi-national, award-winning columnist Woody Woodburn comes a magical, heartstring-pulling debut novel about family ties that bind us across time.

POETRY

Ali, Kazim. *Sukun: New and Selected Poems*. Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 2023.
“Sukun” means serenity or calm, and a sukun is also a form of punctuation in Arabic orthography that denotes a pause over a consonant. *Sukun* draws a generous selection from Kazim Ali’s six previous full-length collections and includes thirty-five new poems.

Ampleman, Lisa. *Mom in Space: Poems*. Baton Rouge, LA: University of Louisiana Press, 2024.
Mom in Space is a complicated love letter to both the intergalactic and the terrestrial. Using the lens of spaceflight, Lisa Ampleman explores personal and political subjects, from fertility tests and parenting to climate change and civil rights.

Blackwell, Robert E. *Hurry, the Meter’s Running!* Columbus, OH: R & R Blackwell and Associates, 2013.

This book is for those who like to read and write poetry; such folks will always have new worlds to explore.

Blackwell, Robert E. *Letters from Northgate*. Edited by Janelda Hellen Guido. Columbus, OH: R & R Blackwell and Associates, 2022.
Letters from Northgate is a collection of poetry and mini-essays covering current events and personal reflections.

Blackwell, Robert E. *Poets are Druids*. Columbus, OH: Blackwell Creations, 2024.
Robert E. Blackwell’s latest poetry collection is an exploration of the emotions brought on by life and the people who live it.

Christensen-Dean, Gay A. *As I See the World*. Rocky River, OH: Gay A. Christensen-Dean, 2022.
A collection of poetry based on the true experiences of author Gay A. Christensen-Dean.

Drury, John Philip. *The Teller’s Cage: Poems and Imaginary Movies*. San Jose, CA: Able Muse Press, 2024.
This book opens with baseball and culminates with persona poems starring the poet’s mother, unraveling factual and fantastical chronicles in enchanting locales.

Fox, Kate. *The Company Misery Loves: Poems*. Russell, KY: Sheila-Na-Gig Editions, 2024.
In his *Collected Works*, the surrealist poet Paul Eluard writes, “There is another world, but it is in this one.” The poems in this collection set out to examine what it means to exist in those distinct but inseparable worlds—worlds that can cause both misery and joy for those who

are time-bound, but can also grant infinite insight and wisdom.

Heath, William. *Alms for Oblivion*. American Fork, UT: Kelsay Books, 2024.

Alms for Oblivion collects the best of William Heath's recent poems, ranging from autobiographical reminiscences to social commentary, travels abroad, observations of the natural world, meditations on the art of poetry, and a final section on aging and the fate of our nation.

Johnson, Daniel Brock. *Shadow ACT: An Elegy for Journalist James Foley*. San Francisco, CA: McSweeney's, 2023.

In his second collection—a powerful act of documentary poetics a decade in the making—Daniel Brock Johnson chronicles the perils and joys of fatherhood and a shattering tragedy that plays out thousands of miles away. Nearly two years after the poet's closest friend went missing, journalist James Foley was executed by ISIS in Syria. In this collection, Johnson often speaks directly to his missing friend, even long after his death.

Kamara, Yalie Saweda. *Besaydoo: Poems*. Minneapolis, MN: Milkweed Editions, 2024.

Selected by Amaud Jamaul Johnson for the 2023 Jake Adam York Prize, Yalie Saweda Kamara's *Besaydoo* is an elegantly wrought love song to home—as place, as people, as body, and as language.

Kropf, John. *A Midwestern Heart*. Huron, OH: Bottom Dog Press, 2024. In John Kropf's first collection of poetry, the images may come from the Midwest, but the sentiments are universal.

Mohring, Ron. *The Boy Who Reads in the Trees*. Washington, DC: Word Works Books, 2024.

How do we survive the undeserved and incomprehensible violence of the world we are born into? Poet Ron Mohring shows us the childhood and coming of age of a queer boy growing up in rural America, then the man wrestling with the memories.

Mohring, Ron. *Relative Hearts*. Tustin, CA: Lily Poetry Review, 2023.

How does a family heal from brutal trauma? The speaker in *Relative Hearts* faces the burdens of both his namesake and his past by digging to uncover personal details while there are still witnesses to tell (their versions of) the truth. Having endured a world in which queerness equals endangerment, the speaker struggles to untangle his own survival mechanisms and come to terms with how prolonged physical abuse has shaped his identity, and his family's.

Navicky, Jefferson. *Head of Island Beautification for the Rural Outlands*. San Diego, CA: A C Books, 2023.

When William Harrison Brown (aka Bird) returns to the island of his youth, he attempts to take his place in the long line of landscape painters in his family. Bird, however, paints with a 1961 Underwood typewriter. This series of interlinked prose poems follows Bird as he attempts to make peace with his identity as a son, islander, and writer in a family of visual artists. The book is part history of grief, part exploration of ghosts and hauntings, part philosophy of landscape painting, and part meditation on the nature of islands.

Robinson, Nicole. *Without a Field Guide*. Atlanta, GA: Unbound Edition Press, 2023.

This poetry debut combines lyric intensity with narrative sweep, attending to the bare reality of trauma and its aftermath, and focusing on the healing process through a wide variety of naturalistic subjects informed by the practice of narrative medicine.

Sadler, J. V. *From My Eye to the Sky*. Cincinnati, OH: J. V. Sadler, 2024.

From My Eye to the Sky places a magnifying glass on American society and forces it to take a look at itself.

Stephens, Dior J. *CRUEL/CRUEL*. New York, NY: Nightboat Books, 2023.

CRUEL/CRUEL is the manifestation of a Black, queer voice grappling with the intricacies of (un)belonging and identity. These poems use genres of queerness and race to reckon with the pervasive power of oppressive institutions, shaped by art and a soundtrack of Black musical traditions of resistance: from jazz to soul to experimental to hip hop.

Tripoulas, John. *Polytropos*. Loveland, OH: Dos Madres Press, 2024.

Polytropos is an archaic Greek word that occurs in the first line of Homer's *Odyssey*, referring to the epic's hero, Odysseus. Among the many attempts to translate the word, Robert Fagles calls Odysseus a man of "twists and turns," and in Emily Wilson's version he is "complicated." It's an apt description of this volume of poems, which has many "twists and turns"—autobiographical, philosophical, medical, and archaeological.

MIDDLE GRADE & YOUNG ADULT

Aguirre, Jorge. *Call Me Iggy*. Illus. by Rafael Rosado. New York, NY: First Second, 2024.

Ignacio “Iggy” Garcia is an Ohio-born Colombian American teen living his best life. After bumping into Marisol (and her coffee) at school, Iggy’s world turns upside down. But Marisol has enough on her mind between school, work, family, and the uphill battle of getting her legal papers. As Iggy stresses over how to get Marisol to like him, his grandfather comes to the rescue. The thing is, not only is his abuelito dead, but he also gives terrible love advice. The worst. With his ghost abuelito’s meddling, Iggy’s life begins to unravel as he sets off on a journey of self-discovery.

Bell, David. *She’s Gone*. New York, NY: Sourcebooks Fire, 2022.

When seventeen-year-old Hunter Gifford wakes up in the hospital on the night of homecoming, he’s shocked to learn he and his girlfriend, Chloe Summers, have been in a terrible car accident. Hunter has no memory of the crash, and his shock turns to horror when he is told Chloe’s blood has been found in the car—but she has disappeared.

Berne, Emma Carlson. *The Sparkle Dragons: One Horn to Rule Them All (Sparkle Dragons #2)*. Illus. by Luke Flowers. New York, NY: Clarion Books, 2023.

In this second graphic novel adventure, join the spunky and powerful Sparkle Dragons as they blast their glitter fire and put their brains together to save the queendom from a malicious unicorn.

Boyce, Kristy. *Dungeons and Drama*. New York, NY: Delacorte Press, 2024.

Musical lover Riley has big plans to bring back her high school’s spring musical. But when Riley takes her mom’s car without permission, she’s grounded and stuck with the worst punishment: spending her after-school hours working at her dad’s game shop. Riley can’t waste her time working when she has a musical to save, so she convinces Nathan—a nerdy teen employee—to cover her shifts. In exchange, she’ll flirt with him to make his gamer-girl crush jealous. But Riley didn’t realize that meant joining Nathan’s Dungeons & Dragons game . . . or that role playing would be so fun.

Daywalt, Drew. *They Call Me No Sam!* Illus. by Mike Lowery. New York, NY: Clarion Books, 2024.

From Drew Daywalt, the #1 *New York Times*–bestselling author of *The Day the Crayons Quit*, and illustrator Mike Lowery comes a heavily illustrated, middle grade novel about Sam, a noble pug who will go to any lengths to protect his family from the bad guys.

Ebbeler, Jeffrey. *Jerry, Let Me See the Moon*. New York, NY: Holiday House, 2024.

Things get squirrely when Jerry discovers that his new town is a sanctuary for were-creatures—humans who turn into animals when the moon is full—in an action-packed romp for younger middle grade readers.

Knight, F. M. *Halle Harris & the Truth Seekers: Hidden Gems*.

Yellow Springs, OH: Perry Harris Publishing, 2024. Twelve-year-old Halle Harris wants

to be a great kid counselor, but her attempts to help her classmates get along have done more harm than good. If she screws up one more time, her grandmother won’t let her go on the class trip to Paris! But a new case could be the answer to all of Halle’s problems—even though it lands her and her friends Olympia, Ahi, and Poogle Bear in the middle of a jewelry heist, and threatens to get one of her classmates deported.

Libenson, Terri. *Always Anthony (Emmie and Friends #8)*. New York, NY: Balzer + Bray, 2024.

The eighth book in the *New York Times*–bestselling Emmie & Friends series, told from the alternating voices of popular Anthony and timid Leah as they grapple with a bullying incident at school.

McGinnis, Mindy. *Under This Red Rock*. New York, NY: Katherine Tegen Books, 2024.

From award-winning author Mindy McGinnis comes a mesmerizing psychological mystery following a teen girl who is coping with the death of her brother as she starts a new job in the caverns of Ohio—only to become the number one suspect in her coworker’s murder.

Molebash, Wes. *Travis Davenport Powers Up! (Travis Davenport #2)*. New York, NY: First Second, 2024.

Travis Davenport is destined to save the multiverse—at least, that’s what the prophecy says. But if he’s a legendary warrior in the making, shouldn’t he be a little better at sword fighting? With his engineering genius, Travis could develop technology to make himself unstoppable, but the wise sorcerer Bela says he needs to find his

power within. Wherever he finds it, he better do it soon! The evil Nol Invictus, the ruler of the mystical realm Solusterra, is preparing a second attack—and this time, his lieutenant, the Rogue, has an army of velociborgs for backup.

Parris, Wendy. *Field of Screams*. New York, NY: Delacorte Press, 2023.

A new pulse-pounding supernatural mystery about twelve-year-old Rebecca, who has always wanted to hunt ghosts . . . until she meets one.

Pilkey, Dav. *Dog Man with Love: The Official Coloring Book*. New York, NY: Graphix, 2023.

Spend hours of fun coloring your favorite characters in the official Dog Man coloring book by Dav Pilkey, the internationally bestselling creator of the Dog Man and Cat Kid Comic Club series.

Pilkey, Dav. *The Scarlet Shedder (Dog Man #12)*. New York, NY: Scholastic, 2024.

When Dog Man gets sprayed by a skunk, he gets dunked in tomato juice. The stink disappears, but the scarlet red color remains. Now exiled, this spunky superhero must struggle to save the citizens who shunned him!

Quinlan, Skye. *Don't Be a Drag*.

Salem, MA: Page Street YA, 2024. Eighteen-year-old Briar Vincent is spending the summer in New York City with her older brother, Beau, also known as the drag queen Bow Regard. Backstage at the gay bar where Beau performs, Briar just wants to be a fly on the wall. But when the cute-but-conceited drag king Spencer Read disrespects an up-and-coming performer,

Briar steps out of her comfort zone and joins the annual drag king competition with the goal of knocking Spencer off his pedestal.

Raasch, Sara, and Beth Revis. *Night of the Witch (Witch and Hunter #1)*. New York, NY: Sourcebooks Fire, 2023.

When magical enemies Fritzi and Otto are unexpectedly thrown together, neither is sure they can trust the other. A reluctant truce fueled by their common enemy takes them from the city at the heart of Otto's powers to the wild and mysterious Black Forest. As old truths come to light and new dangers are revealed, Fritzi and Otto uncover a horrifying plot, but their own growing feelings for each other may be the most powerful magic of all.

Rex, Adam. *A Little Like Waking*. New York, NY: Roaring Brook Press, 2023.

Zelda is stuck in a dream where people can fly, bears sneeze money, and her childhood cat, Patches, is somehow alive despite being run over years ago. Things only get stranger when Zelda meets Langston, a sweet, timid guy who feels more real to her than anyone she's ever met. As Zelda and Langston explore the far reaches of the dreamscape together, they find themselves growing closer and closer.

Richards, Natalie D. *49 Miles Alone*. New York, NY: Sourcebooks Fire, 2024.

A year ago, Katie and her cousin Aster survived a night that left their world fractured. Desperate to heal and leave the past behind them, they tackle four days of hiking in the Utah backcountry. But an illness, an

injury, and a freak storm leave them short on confidence and supplies—and at the mercy of a disconcerting young couple they meet on the trail.

Van Vleet, Carmella. *Frozen in Time: What Ice Cores Can Tell Us About Climate Change*. New York, NY: Holiday House, 2024.

A dazzling introduction to paleoclimatology for kids, connecting the methods that scientists use to study our climate history with future climate change solutions.

JUVENILE

Abaza, Sahtinay. *The Ramadan Drummer*. Illus. by Dinara Mirtalipova. New Rochelle, NY: Reycraft Books, 2024.

Experience the magic of Ramadan through the eyes of Adam and the Ramadan Drummer. This book is not just a story; it's a celebration of traditions, values, and the profound sense of community that makes Ramadan a truly special time for families around the world.

Bonilla, Lindsay. *The Storyteller*.

Illus. by Noar Lee Naggan. New York, NY: Nancy Paulsen Books, 2024. Griffin's grandmother spins the most marvelous stories, from breathtaking fairy tales to fascinating family lore. These stories fill his mind with wonder and magic. But when Griffin sees his grandmother's once-bright spark begin to fade, he is scared to face the future. Fortunately, he has her stories to guide him—and to remind him that he is braver than he could ever imagine.

Cotter, Bill. *Don't Push the Button! On the Farm*. New York, NY: Sourcebooks Jabberwocky, 2024. Larry, the lovable monster from the *USA Today*–bestselling book *Don't Push the Button!*, heads to the barnyard in this interactive adventure. Whatever you do, do NOT push the button and make animal noises!

Cowdrey, Richard. *Fiona and the Easter Egg Hunt*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zonderkidz, 2024. Join hippo Fiona, the beloved internet sensation from the Cincinnati Zoo and Botanical Garden, as she plans an Easter egg hunt for her animal friends at the zoo.

Daywalt, Drew. *The Wrong Book*. Illus. by Alex Willmore. New York, NY: Philomel Books, 2024. What if the narrator of the book you're reading is just . . . WRONG?! This hilarious book from the author of *The Day the Crayons Quit* will have you correcting what you're reading—and laughing.

Gerber, Carole. *A Tree for Me*. Illus. by Helena Pérez García. Sanger, CA: Familius, 2024. There are amazing trees that live in our world—yellow poplar, American beech, crepe myrtle, and so many more! But how do you know which ones are which? In this heartwarming tale, a father lovingly teaches his son to identify eight common trees in a park, then surprises him with his own tree to plant and nurture.

Hamilton, Kersten. *The Tugboat and the Silver Moon*. Illus. by Barry Gott. New York, NY: Viking Books for Young Readers, 2024.

A picture book from the creator of the Red Truck and Friends series about a ship stuck in a canal and the moon that sets it free.

Ken, Pen, and Alana Pedalino. *Kenny and the Cookie Lady*. Illus. by Jade Pilgrom. Buffalo, NY: Windmill Books, 2024. Kenny has just moved onto Sugar Street in Cleveland. His new neighbor is the Cookie Lady, famous for baking cookies for Cleveland Cavaliers players—and a few extra for the neighborhood kids who show her a good report card. Based on Diane Simon, the real-life Cleveland Cookie Lady, who has been baking for Midwestern NBA players for more than forty years.

Khalil, Aya. *My First Book of Arabic Words: An ABC Rhyming Book of Arabic Language and Culture*. Illus. by Chaymaa Sobhy. North Clarendon, VT: Tuttle Publishing, 2024. A perfect read-aloud bedtime book and the ideal accompaniment to guide emerging readers, *My First Book of Arabic Words* introduces children to the basic words and simple vocabulary of Arabic through colorful rhymes and beautiful imagery. The ABCs of Arabic life are captured in Chaymaa Sobhy's illustrations, offering a contemporary lens on the great dynamism and diversity found in global Arab culture.

Moore, Melanie, and Brian Wray. *The Book Bus*. Illus. by Mike Helm. Atglen, PA: Schiffer Kids, 2024. Based on the true story of the Book Bus in Cincinnati, this picture book follows a vintage VW pickup truck that embarks on a new adventure to share the joy of reading.

Parker, Susan. *Miss Mary and the United Nations*. Meadville, PA: Christian Faith Publishing, 2024. After living a life of caring for her family, Mary Ann finds herself alone in an unfamiliar place. Her new neighborhood has lots of children. Many of the families are recent immigrants. Slowly, Miss Mary befriends the children and their parents, realizing that God has placed her right where she belongs.

Rosenstock, Barb. *The Great Lakes: Our Freshwater Treasure*. Illus. by Jamey Christoph. New York, NY: Knopf Books for Young Readers, 2024. This picture book tells readers all about the five largest lakes in North America: how they formed, the importance of their abundant freshwater, and how they've become a national treasure.

Rowe, Sarah. *From the Farm to Our Table*. Illus. by Amanda Morrow. Louisville, KY: Gnome Road Publishing, 2024. Based on WWE superstar Sarah Rowe's homesteading lifestyle, this picture book follows twins Finlay and Leo as they complete their chores and help prepare a farm-to-table family meal.

Shaw, Patricia Ann. *Wild Wally*. Illus. by Red Maylon. Palm Coast, FL: Sunsational Publishing, 2024. Meet Mamaw and Pops with their little playful puppy, Wally. See what antics Wally gets into on a daily basis, exhausting his owners. He runs, he hides, and he can be quite naughty at times—but he's loved from the tip of his snout to the tip of his tail.

Thank You!

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