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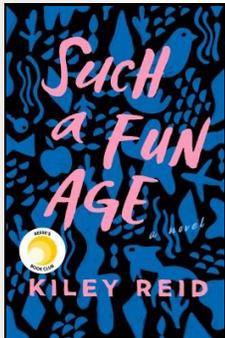
Readers' Advisory Committee

FEBRUARY 2020

# STAFF PICKS

To find book suggestions on the web go to [www.nccde.org/374](http://www.nccde.org/374)

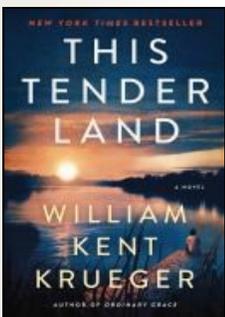
## FICTION



### **SUCH A FUN AGE BY KILEY REID**

**(PICKED BY SLS)**

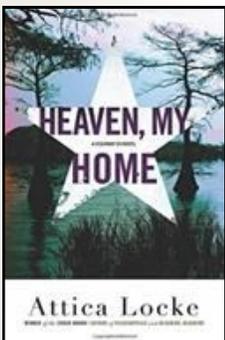
Alix Chamberlain is a woman who gets what she wants and has made a living showing other women how to do the same. A mother to two small girls, she started out as a blogger and has quickly built herself into a confidence-driven brand. So she is shocked when her babysitter, Emira Tucker, is confronted while watching the Chamberlains' toddler one night. Seeing a young black woman out late with a white child, a security guard at their local high-end supermarket accuses Emira of kidnapping two-year-old Briar. A small crowd gathers, a bystander films everything, and Emira is furious and humiliated. Alix resolves to make it right. But Emira herself is aimless, broke, and wary of Alix's desire to help. At twenty-five, she is about to lose her health insurance and has no idea what to do with her life. When the video of Emira unearths someone from Alix's past, both women find themselves on a crash course that will upend everything they think they know about themselves, and each other. (320 pgs)



### **THIS TENDER LAND BY WILLIAM KENT KRUEGER**

**(PICKED BY PB)**

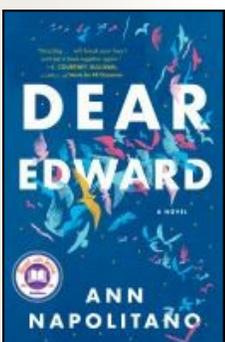
1932, Minnesota—the Lincoln School is a pitiless place where hundreds of Native American children, forcibly separated from their parents, are sent to be educated. It is also home to an orphan named Odie O'Banion, a lively boy whose exploits earn him the superintendent's wrath. Forced to flee, he and his brother Albert, their best friend Mose, and a brokenhearted little girl named Emmy steal away in a canoe, heading for the mighty Mississippi and a place to call their own. Over the course of one unforgettable summer, these four orphans will journey into the unknown and cross paths with others who are adrift, from struggling farmers and traveling faith healers to displaced families and lost souls of all kinds. (450 pgs)



### **HEAVEN, MY HOME BY ATTICA LOCKE**

**(PICKED BY BS)**

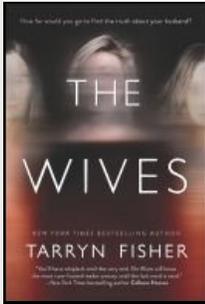
9-year-old Levi King knew he should have left for home sooner; now he's alone in the darkness of vast Caddo Lake, in a boat whose motor just died. A sudden noise distracts him - and all goes dark. Darren Matthews is trying to emerge from another kind of darkness; after the events of his previous investigation, his marriage is in a precarious state of re-building, and his career and reputation lie in the hands of his mother, who's never exactly had his best interests at heart. An unlikely possibility of rescue arrives in the form of a case in a small lakeside town where the local economy thrives on nostalgia for ante-bellum Texas - and some of the era's racial attitudes still thrive as well. Levi's disappearance has links to Darren's last case, and to a wealthy businesswoman, the boy's grandmother, who seems more concerned about the fate of her business than that of her grandson. Darren has to battle centuries-old suspicions and prejudices, as well as threats that have been reignited in the current political climate, as he races to find the boy, and to save himself. (295 pgs)



### **DEAR EDWARD BY ANN NAPOLITANO**

**(PICKED BY SM)**

One summer morning, twelve-year-old Edward Adler, his older brother, his parents, and 183 other passengers board a flight in Newark headed for Los Angeles. Among them is a Wall Street wunderkind, a young woman coming to terms with an unexpected pregnancy, an injured vet returning from Afghanistan, a septuagenarian business tycoon, and a free-spirited woman running away from her controlling husband. And then, tragically, the plane crashes. Edward is the sole survivor. Edward's story captures the attention of the nation, but he struggles to find a place for himself in a world without his family. He continues to feel that a piece of him has been left in the sky, forever tied to the plane and all of his fellow passengers. But then he makes an unexpected discovery—one that will lead him to the answers of some of life's most profound questions: When you've lost everything, how do you find yourself? How do you discover your purpose? What does it mean not just to survive, but to truly live? (352 pgs)

**THE WIVES BY TARRYN FISHER****(PICKED BS)**

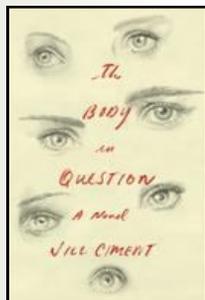
Thursday is in a polygamous relationship, the second of three wives of Seth, a builder who divides his time between his offices and wives in Seattle and Portland. A nurse who lives in Seattle, Thursday knows Seth's rules against snooping into the lives of the other wives (whom Seth calls Monday and Tuesday), both of whom live in Portland. But with just one night a week with Seth, jealousy gets the better of her, and she manages to identify and meet the others. Soon she's befriending number three, pregnant Hannah, who shows signs of physical abuse, and sharing sorrow about miscarriages with number one, high-powered lawyer Regina. When an argument with Seth turns physical, Thursday ends up in a hospital psych ward trying to determine what is real and what is not, fighting against the medications that keep her in a drugged state. (256 pgs) (excerpt from Booklist, 11/15/19)

**LADY CLEMENTINE BY MARIE BENEDICT****(PICKED BY SH)**

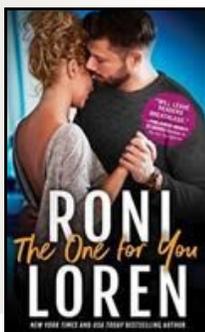
In 1909, Clementine steps off a train with her new husband, Winston. An angry woman emerges from the crowd to attack, shoving him in the direction of an oncoming train. Just before he stumbles, Clementine grabs him by his suit jacket. This will not be the last time Clementine Churchill will save her husband. Lady Clementine is the ferocious story of the ambitious woman beside Winston Churchill, the story of a partner who did not flinch through the sweeping darkness of war, and who would not surrender either to expectations or to enemies. (336 pgs)

**WELCOME TO THE PINE AWAY MOTEL AND CABINS BY KATARINA BIVALD (PICKED BY SM)**

The Pine Creek Motel has seen better days. Henny would call it charming, but she's always seen the best in things. Like now, when she's just met an untimely end crossing the road. She's not going to let a tiny thing like death stop her from living fully—not when her friends and family need her the most. After the funeral is over, her body is buried, and the last casserole dish is empty, Henny is still around. She's not sure why, but she realizes she has one last opportunity to help her friends discover the happiness they once knew before they lose the motel and cabins they've cherished for years. (448 pgs)

**THE BODY IN QUESTION BY JILL CIMENT****(PICKED BY SLS)**

The place: central Florida. The situation: a sensational murder trial, a rich, white teenage girl—a twin—on trial for murdering her toddler brother. Two of the jurors: Hannah, a married fifty-two-year-old former Rolling Stone Magazine photographer and Graham, a forty-one-year-old anatomy professor. Both are sequestered along with the other jurors at the Econo Lodge off I-75. As the shocking and numbing details of the crime are revealed during a string of days and courtroom hours, and the nights play out in a series of court-financed meals at Outback Steak House and Red Lobster, Hannah and Graham fall into a furtive affair, keeping their oath as jurors never to discuss the trial. During deliberations the lovers learn that they are on opposing sides of the case. Suddenly they look at one another through an altogether different lens, as things become more complicated. After the verdict, Hannah returns home to her much older husband, but the case ignites once again and Hannah's "one last dalliance before she is too old" takes on profoundly personal and moral consequences as *The Body in Question* moves to its affecting, powerful, and surprising conclusion. (192 pgs)

**THE ONE FOR YOU BY RONI LOREN****(PICKED BY KT)**

Kincaid Breslin wasn't supposed to survive that fateful night at Long Acre when so many died, including her boyfriend—but survive she did. She doesn't know why she got that chance, but now she takes life by the horns and doesn't let anybody stand in her way. Ashton Isaacs was her best friend when disaster struck all those years ago, but he chose to run as far away as he could. Now fate has brought him back to town, and Ash doesn't know how to cope with his feelings for Kincaid and his grief over their lost friendship. For Ash has been carrying secrets, and he knows that once Kincaid learns the truth, he'll lose any chance he might have had with the only woman he's ever loved. (442 pgs)

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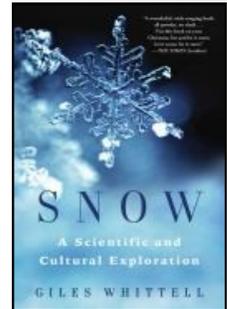
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## NON-FICTION

### **SNOW BY GILES WHITTELL**

**(PICKED BY SLH)**

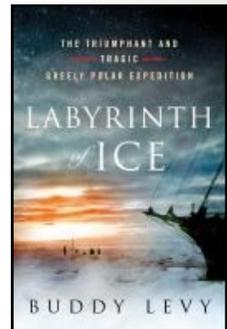
Go on an extraordinary journey across centuries and continents to experience the wonders of snow; from the prehistoric humans that trekked across it tens of thousands of years ago to the multi-billion-dollar industry behind our moving, making, and playing with snow. Giles Whittell explores how snow dictates where we live, provides us with drinking water, and has influenced countless works of art and more. Whittell also uncovers compelling mysteries of this miraculous substance, such as why avalanches happen, how snow saved a British prime minister's life, where the legend of the yeti comes from, and the terrifying truth behind the opening ceremony of the 1960 winter Olympics. (256 pgs)



### **LABYRINTH OF ICE BY BUDDY LEVY**

**(PICKED BY SMC)**

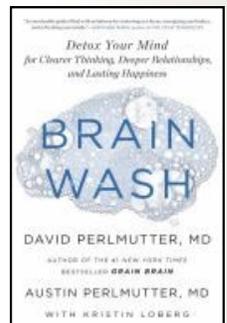
In July 1881, Lt. A.W. Greely and his crew of 24 scientists and explorers were bound for the last region unmarked on global maps- Farthest North. Greely and his men confronted every possible challenge—vicious wolves, sub-zero temperatures, and months of total darkness—as they set about exploring one of the most remote, unrelenting environments on the planet. In May 1882, they broke the 300-year-old record, and returned to camp to eagerly await the resupply ship scheduled to return at the end of the year. Only nothing came. 250 miles south, a wall of ice prevented any rescue from reaching them. Back home, Greely's wife worked tirelessly against government resistance to rally a rescue mission. Months passed, and Greely and his men loaded the remaining provisions and tools onto their five small boats, and pushed off into the treacherous waters. Now new dangers awaited: insanity, threats of mutiny, and cannibalism. As food dwindled and the men weakened, Greely's expedition clung desperately to life. *Labyrinth of Ice* tells the true story of the heroic lives and deaths of these voyagers hell-bent on fame and fortune—at any cost—and how their journey changed the world. (400 pgs)



### **BRAIN WASH BY DAVID PERLMUTTER**

**(PICKED BY BS)**

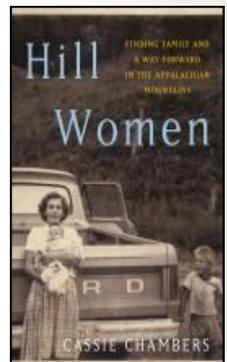
Contemporary life provides us with infinite opportunities, along with endless temptations. We can immerse ourselves in the vast world of digital media. We can buy goods and services for rapid delivery with our fingertips. But living in this 24/7 hyper-reality poses serious risks to our physical and mental states, our connections to others, and even to the world at large. *Brain Wash* builds from a simple premise: our brains are being gravely manipulated, resulting in behaviors that leave us more lonely, depressed, distrustful, illness-prone, and overweight than ever before. The book identifies the mental hijacking that undermines each and every one of us, and presents the tools necessary to think more clearly, make better decisions, strengthen bonds with others, and develop healthier habits. *Brain Wash* features a 10-day boot camp program, including a meal plan and 40 delicious original recipes. (304 pgs)

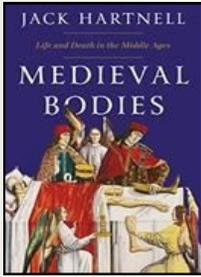


### **HILL WOMEN BY CASSIE CHAMBERS**

**(PICKED BY BS)**

Nestled in the Appalachian Mountains, Owsley County is one of the poorest counties in both Kentucky and the country. Buildings are crumbling and fields sit vacant, as tobacco farming and coal mining decline. But strong women are finding creative ways to subsist in their hollers in the hills. Cassie Chambers grew up in these hollers and, through the women who raised her, she traces her own path out of and back into the Kentucky mountains. Her mother Wilma became the first in the family to graduate from high school. Married at nineteen and pregnant with Cassie a few months later, Wilma beat the odds to finish college. Cassie would spend much of her childhood with Granny and her aunt, both while Wilma was in college and after. With her "hill women" values guiding her, Cassie went on to graduate from Harvard Law. But while the Ivy League gave her knowledge and opportunities, its privileged world felt far from her reality, and she moved back home to help her fellow rural Kentucky women by providing free legal services. Chambers uses these women's stories paired with her own journey to break down the myth of the hillbilly and illuminate a region whose poor communities, especially women, can lead it into the future. (304 pgs)

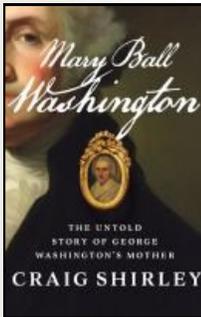




**MEDIEVAL BODIES BY JACK HARTNELL**

**(PICKED BY SLS)**

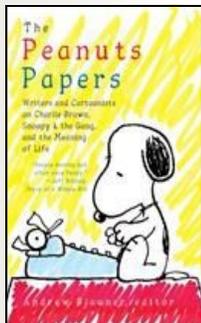
*Medieval Bodies* guides us on a head-to-heel journey through this era’s revolutionary advancements and disturbing convictions. We learn about the surgeons who dissected a living man’s stomach, then sewed him up again; about the geographers who delineated racial groups by skin color; and about the practice of fasting to gain spiritual renown. Encompassing medicine and mysticism, politics and art—and complete with vivid, full-color illustrations—*Medieval Bodies* shows us how it felt to live and die a thousand years ago. (352 pgs)



**MARY BALL WASHINGTON BY CRAIG SHIRLEY [BIO]**

**(PICKED BY SMC)**

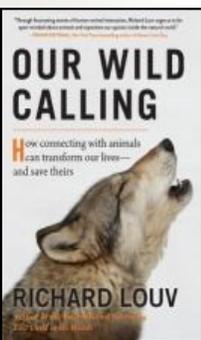
Stubborn, aristocratic Mary Ball Washington was entrenched in the Old World ways of her ancestors, dismissing the American experiment even as her son led the successful rebellion against the crown. During his youth, ambitious George dove into the hard-scrabble work of a surveyor and rose through the ranks of the fledgling colonial army, even as his overprotective mother tried to discourage these efforts. While she passed down her strength and individuality to George, she also sought to protect him from the risks he needed to take to become a daring general and president. But it was this resistance itself which fanned the spark of George’s independence into a flame. The constant tug of war between the two throughout the early years helped define George’s character. Craig Shirley vividly brings to life a resilient widow who singlehandedly raised six children and ran a large farm at a time when most women’s duties were relegated to household matters. Throughout, Shirley compares and contrasts mother and son, illuminating the qualities they shared and the differences that divided them. (368 pgs)



**THE PEANUTS PAPERS BY ANDREW BLAUNER**

**(PICKED BY SLS)**

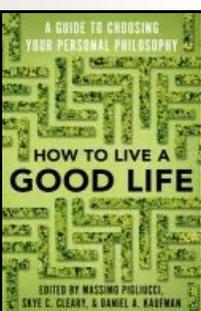
Peanuts, Charles Schulz’s beloved comic strip, has given the world a cast of characters for the ages—Charlie Brown, Snoopy, and Lucy among them. Here, in collection of thirty-two essays, artists and writers ranging from Ann Patchett to Chris Ware consider the deeper truths of Peanuts, its influence on their lives and on the culture more broadly, and the lessons it can teach us about disappointment, melancholy, and those fleeting moments of warm-puppy happiness. The contributors reflect on the experience of discovering Peanuts as a child, their identification with its characters and predicaments, and, for the artists in the book, the momentous effects of their encounters with the strip on their later careers. Taken together, the essays and comics of *The Peanuts Papers* enrich our understanding of the Peanuts gang and its world, with contributions not only about Charlie Brown and Snoopy but also Linus, Sally, Pigpen, and Peppermint Patty. (352 pgs)



**OUR WILD CALLING BY RICHARD LOUV**

**(PICKED BY SH)**

Richard Louv redefines the future of human-animal coexistence. *Our Wild Calling* explores these powerful and mysterious bonds and how they can transform our mental, physical, and spiritual lives, serve as an antidote to the growing epidemic of human loneliness, and help us tap into the empathy required to preserve life on Earth. Louv interviews researchers, theologians, wildlife experts, psychologists, and others to show how people are communicating with animals in ancient and new ways; how dogs can teach children ethical behavior; how animal-assisted therapy may yet transform the mental health field; and what role the human-animal relationship plays in our spiritual health. He reports on wildlife relocation and on how the growing populations of wild species in urban areas are blurring the lines between domestic and wild animals. *Our Wild Calling* makes the case for protecting, promoting, and creating a sustainable and shared habitat for all creatures—not out of fear, but out of love. (320 pgs)



**HOW TO LIVE A GOOD LIFE BY MASSIMO PIGLIUCCI**

**(PICKED BY SMC)**

This wide-ranging collection brings together essays by fifteen leading philosophers reflecting on what it means to live according to a philosophy of life. From Eastern philosophies (Daoism, Confucianism, and Buddhism) and classical Western philosophies (such as Aristotelianism and Stoicism), to the four major religions, as well as contemporary philosophies (such as existentialism and effective altruism), each contributor offers a lively, personal account of how they find meaning in the practice of their chosen philosophical tradition. Together, the pieces in *How to Live a Good Life* provide not only a beginner’s guide to choosing a life philosophy but also a timely portrait of what it means to live an examined life in the twenty-first century. (256 pgs)